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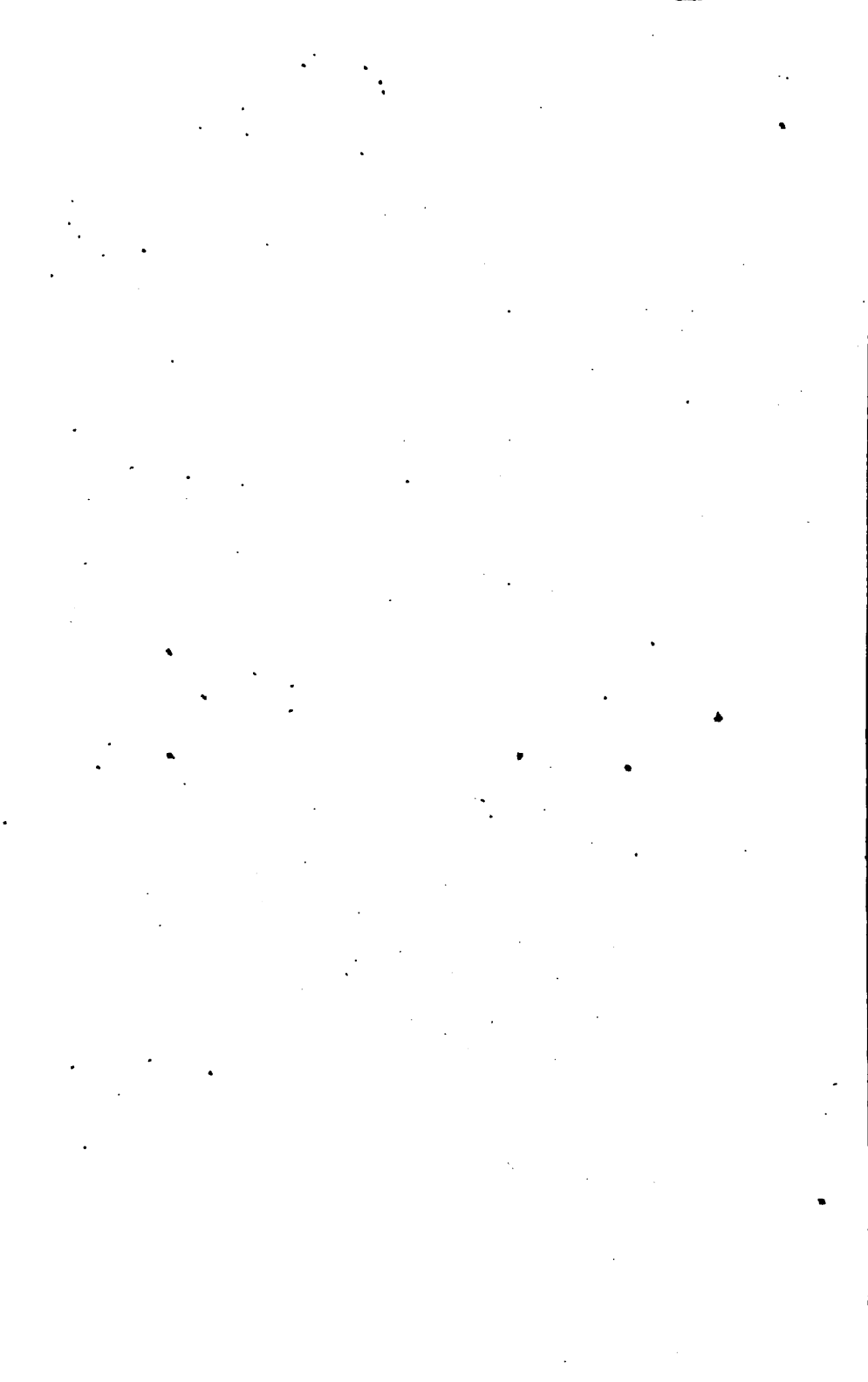
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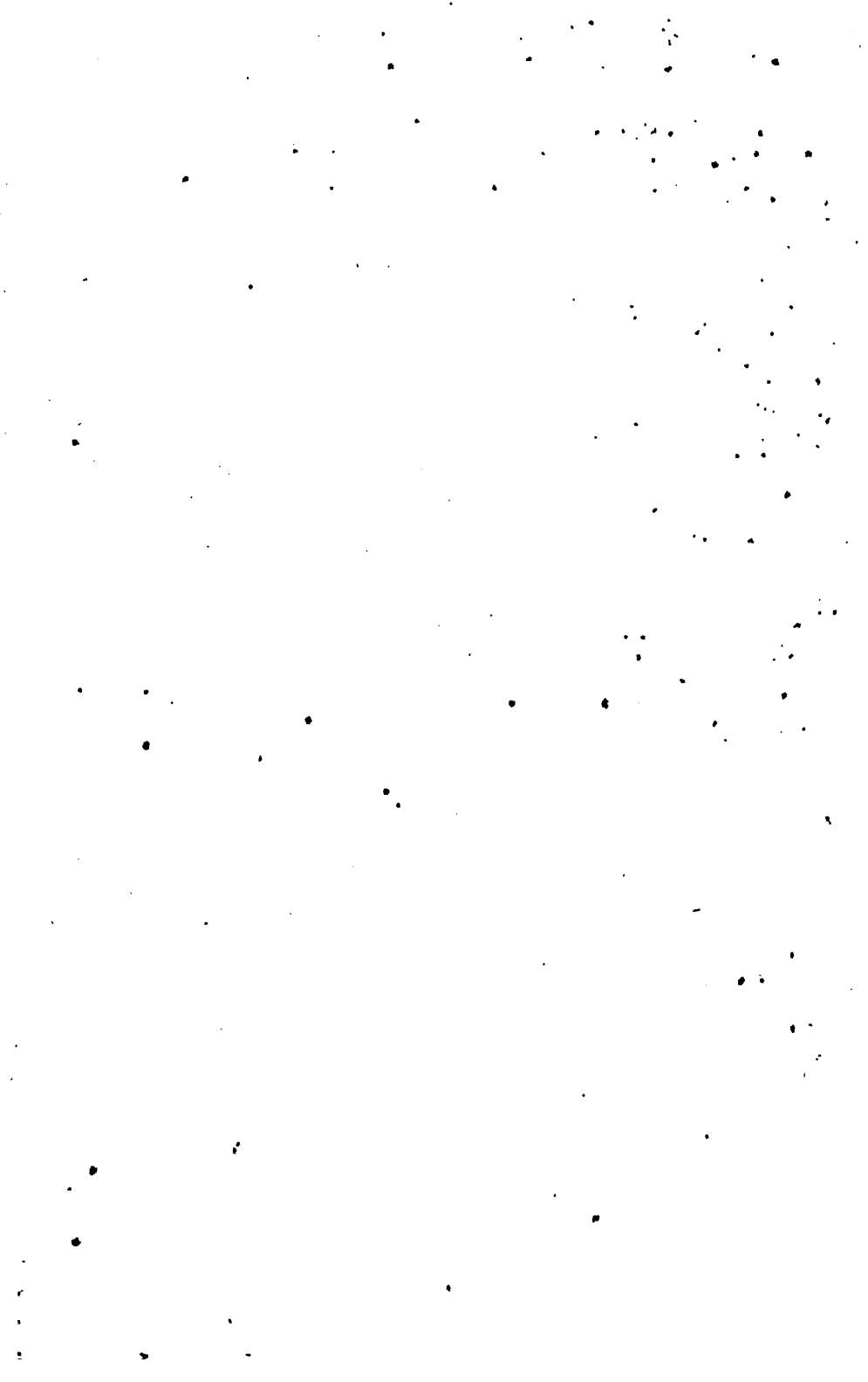
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THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY.

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THE
SCIENCE OF BEAUTY:

AN ANALYTICAL INQUIRY INTO THE
LAWS OF ÆSTHETICS.

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265 . i . 595.

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

THE METAPHYSICS OF ÆSTHETICS	PAGE I
--	-----------

CHAPTER II.

BEAUTY.

<i>Law 1.</i> —THE SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT OF BEAUTY CONSISTS IN THE EMOTION OF ADMIRATION	12
--	----

CHAPTER III.

<i>Law 2.</i> —THE OBJECTIVE ELEMENT OF BEAUTY CONSISTS IN THE QUALITY OF SUGGESTIVENESS	41
POETRY CONSISTS IN THE LIBERATION OF BEAUTIFUL ANALOGIES	50

CHAPTER IV.

<i>Law 3.</i> —BEAUTY ATTACHES ONLY TO UTILITY	76
1. OBJECTIVE UTILITY	76

CHAPTER V.

<i>Law 3.</i> —BEAUTY ATTACHES ONLY TO UTILITY— <i>continued</i>	98
2. SUBJECTIVE UTILITY	98
WIT CONSISTS IN THE LIBERATION OF ANALOGIES NOT BEAUTIFUL	125

CHAPTER VI.

	PAGE
<i>Law 4.</i> —THE APPEARANCE OF BEAUTY VARIES INVERSELY WITH THE APPEARANCE OF UTILITY . . .	132

CHAPTER VII.

UGLINESS.

<i>Law 1.</i> —UGLINESS ATTACHES ONLY TO INUTILITY . . .	157
<i>Law 2.</i> —UGLINESS VARIES DIRECTLY WITH SUGGESTED IN- UTILITY	157

CHAPTER VIII.

SUBLIMITY.

<i>Law 1.</i> —SUBLIMITY ATTACHES ONLY TO POWER . . .	166
<i>Law 2.</i> —THE APPEARANCE OF SUBLIMITY VARIES INVERSELY WITH THE APPEARANCE OF POWER . . .	166

CHAPTER IX.

MEANNESS.

<i>Law 1.</i> —MEANNESS ATTACHES ONLY TO IMPOTENCE . . .	190
<i>Law 2.</i> —MEANNESS VARIES DIRECTLY WITH SUGGESTED IM- POTENCE	190
CAPITULAR SUMMARY	197

THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE METAPHYSICS OF ÆSTHETICS.

ONE remarkable fact in human nature is the difficulty we have in explaining our experiences. We all, in a greater or less degree, experience admiration for beauty and awe for sublimity; and we know that these feelings—these emotions of awe and sublimity—are simply what they are felt to be, and nothing more; there has never been any dispute about that. But as to what the causes, qualities, or conditions necessary for awakening these emotions are, we are all disagreed. As to what constitutes beauty or sublimity we are not satisfied ourselves, nor can we accept each other's explanation. All explanations differ in a measure vitally or slightly, and it is impossible to accept one theory without rejecting all the others.

Another remarkable fact in our nature is that these difficulties will never be abandoned until they are resolved. We are ever at war with them, and peace will not be proclaimed till reason gets the victory. The fight may rage, and centuries may roll by, inquiry may draw back baffled and breathless, and mystery may gain a temporary victory—a false and delusive victory of might over right. But inquiry, strengthened and reanimated with fresh hopes and new weapons, will to it again to conquer or to fail; and thus from age to age, and from old world to new

world, the hereditary warfare continues and will continue through a million generations, or till the problem is solved, the spell broken, and ignorance hides its head. The moral of persistence is a reassuring feature in human nature.

The science of æsthetics—the causes or conditions of beauty and sublimity—seems to be still unsettled. Plato and Leibnitz, Hutcheson and Hogarth, Burke and Reynolds, Diderot and Alison have attacked the subject, theorising and refuting, composing and criticising; and they have done well, for any man who has anything to offer on such an issue is bound to put it forth and let it go for what it is worth. The subject of beauty cannot but interest; it is entertaining and instructive, and nothing is wanting but something new and something true to put the problem on its trial again. In setting out on such an enterprise I desire to observe that destructive criticism is no purpose of this disquisition, and if the explanation hereinafter put forward cannot recommend itself without a detailed refutation of previous opinions, then it cannot recommend itself at all.

What constitutes beauty?—Utility? perfection? sensation? relation? smoothness? association? The question has often been asked, and often thus been answered. Let us briefly glance at the first two solutions—utility and perfection. That utility does not constitute beauty seems evident from this, that if it did, the beauty must increase with the utility, which—though men have been found bold enough to maintain it—is a doctrine that is repudiated by the vast majority of mankind. It has been taught that a useful thing which serves its purpose well is more beautiful than anything which does not do so, no matter what the things are or how they are made. It has been held that a dung-basket that answered its purpose well would be a more beautiful object than a golden shield not well formed for use; that in fact the former article would possess beauty and the latter none. This may be so, but it is no evidence whatever that utility *constitutes* beauty—

that beauty and utility are identical conceptions. It merely teaches that beauty can only exist in a useful object, as colour can only exist in a material object. The first theory lays it down that beauty and utility are the *same* thing, from which it follows that increase of utility is increase of beauty. The common sense of mankind has refused to admit this as an hypothesis or to act upon it as a theory; it has refused to attribute more beauty to a mutton-chop than to a hyacinth, or in general to the foods and necessities of life—bread, butter, meat, roots, tea, blankets, boots, soap, coal—than to the luxurious accessories—fruit, flowers, shrubs, birds, butterflies, pictures, feathers, jewellery, &c. Now, if utility constituted beauty, then would this last list of objects be much less beautiful than the first list—a doctrine equally ridiculous to advocate or refute. We may therefore dismiss it from our minds.

The other hypothesis has it that beauty consists in perfection; but this when examined goes to pieces in the same way. A wood-louse may be as perfect of its kind as a tiger-moth, but it is far from being considered as beautiful. Slugs, snails, nettles, thistles may all be as perfect of their kind in colour, shape, motion, organism, and otherwise, as goldfish, bees, birds, eggs, ferns, and grasses, but who will say that they are as beautiful? Toads, and weeds, and reptiles may be perfect, as far as human account of perfection goes; they may have the "line of beauty," they may have symmetry of parts, simplicity, variety, uniformity, hue—almost all that is usually found on analysis to belong to beauty, and yet such reasoning no more satisfies men that a dandelion is as beautiful as a primrose than that a mouse is as big as a mountain because both are logically divisible to infinity. That perfection constitutes beauty is therefore an opinion which may be dismissed like the other.

What, then, is beauty? On what does it depend? Has it any definable existence at all? Are there any qualities

which may be called beautiful and others ugly; if so, what are those qualities? Are they subject to any laws or rules, and where are these to be looked for? In setting out to answer this inquiry, I shall take the liberty of reminding the reader of one of the first and most important principles in metaphysics—one upon which almost all philosophers are agreed, and they are agreed upon extremely few—viz., that we have an immediate and intuitive knowledge of *self in its various modes* and of self alone, and only a mediate or negative knowledge of the objects external to the mind—that is to say, we know intuitively and immediately that we see shape and colour, *i.e.*, that we *feel* them through the optic nerve; that we hear music and noise, *i.e.*, that we *feel* them through the auditory nerve; that we smell musk and ammonia, *i.e.*, that we *feel* them through the olfactory nerve; that we taste cheese and pine-apple, *i.e.*, that we *feel* them through the gustatory nerve; that we receive hot sensations from fire and cold from ice, hardness from solidity, softness from fluids, &c., *i.e.*, that we *feel* them by the sensitive nerve fibres which are coextensive with the epidermis or outer skin of the body. It does not appear, therefore, how we can know anything about the metaphysically innate qualities of objects—supposing such to exist—since we only get *sensations* from those objects, which, sensations being feelings in our own mind, simply means that the objects *make us feel ourselves*. This is the all but unanimous verdict of modern philosophy, and it appears to admit of no extenuation. This is the great stronghold of Idealism, and though the attacks made upon that doctrine have been many, fierce, and long, they have altogether failed to shake it; and it stands this day as impregnable as when it was first built. Berkeley's argument against the independent existence of matter "admits of no answer," says Hume. "All the ingenuity of a century and a half has failed to see a way out of the contradiction exposed by Berkeley," says Mr. Bain. A good

way to test that argument—that exposure, would be to apply it to the science of æsthetics, for if it admits of no answer when applied to the existence of matter, it must be doubly incontrovertible when applied to a science which is derived from and dependent on matter. All branches of knowledge must ultimately have the same basis. What is true in metaphysics must be true for science and art; what is agreed on in metaphysics must be agreed on for science and art; and what is untrue or denied in metaphysics must be untrue and denied for science and art, and for everything else. This fact, so far from being embraced by ethical or æsthetical investigators as a primary axiom of their science, does not seem to have been recognised as a difficulty to be reckoned with. The fact, indeed, has not been unnoticed by philosophers, for some of them have stated it with sufficient distinctness. Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his “*Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy*,” explicitly warns us¹ “that a true psychology is the indispensable scientific basis of morals, of politics, of the science and art of education; that the difficulties of metaphysics lie at the root of all science; that those difficulties can only be quieted by being resolved; and that until they are resolved, positively if possible, but at any rate negatively, we are never assured that any human knowledge, even physical, stands on solid foundations.” There may be a score of passages such as this, but however often the fact has been acknowledged it has not been realised as a truth or practically applied in any except purely metaphysical and psychological investigations.

Idealism, it may be, is but the moiety of a more comprehensive truth, but since it is absolutely unanswerable as far as reason has yet gone, let us even accept it for what it is worth, and endeavour in a disquisition on artistic phenomena—while retaining, of course, the ordinary phraseology—to submit our principles to its require-

¹ P. 2.

ments and bend our logic to its laws. Applied to beauty, Idealism would show that beautiful qualities are mental creations; that they have no more existence in the objects themselves than heat in the fire or sweetness in sugar. Those who have never lent themselves to metaphysical inquiries will call it a monstrous contradiction to deny that there is heat in the fire or sweetness in sugar. A little explanation, however, will convince them that it is merely a question of phraseology, and that they themselves have always held with philosophers instead of the contrary; for when we ask them, Does the fire *feel itself* to be hot? or does the sugar perceive itself to be sweet? they will at once answer, "No." Well, does the poker or the grate, or the fender, or the rug, perceive the heat? or does the sugar-basin or the sugar-tongs, or the tea or the milk, perceive the sweetness? "No." What then? "A sentient creature only." From which it follows that where there is no sensibility there can be no heat or sweetness. There is no sensibility in the fire or in sugar; therefore there is no heat in the fire and no sweetness in sugar. The matter is excessively palpable, for heat is only a name for a particular kind of sensation, and sweetness is only another name for another particular kind of sensation—in other words, heat means *the feeling* of heat, and sweetness *the feeling* of sweetness. The cause is in the external object, and that is all we know about it. Ethical problems are beside our inquiry, and we shall now address ourselves to the psychology of æsthetic phenomena.

There is no beauty inherent in an object, because, granted that there were, how could we ever find it out? We know that an object is the cause of sensations in us; beyond this we know nothing. We do not cause the sensations ourselves, neither have we the power to refuse them; they are caused in us whether we like it or not, therefore they must be caused by something which is not ourself; but when we assert that this something, this object, is *matter, substance, or an instrument*, having an

absolute existence and independent qualities, we get out of our depth, and begin to imagine, "we know not what, and we know not why." The only factor of beauty, then, which exists in an object is the *cause*. This negation of inherent beauty is now only sought to be established logically, but I shall subsequently proceed analytically and adduce individual examples of the truth of the position. I shall, of course, continue to employ the customary terms and phrases, any deviation from which would be mischievous affectation. It may be well to premise, however, that in the following pages the word *pleasure* is always used to denote sense-pleasure, and never to signify emotional gladness; while *agreeable* is employed as the adjective of the latter feeling. The division of the mind's feelings into the two great classes of emotions and sensations renders some such arrangement necessary in order to avoid confusion and mistake.

Let us now distinguish carefully between the two factors in a recognition of beauty, for, by hypothesis, there appear to be two; and unless they are accurately discriminated—whatever be their metaphysical value—it is impossible to arrive at a true analysis of the subject. One of these factors is attributed to the object; the other is contributed by the mind. The former is called a beautiful quality, or shortly *beauty*; the latter is termed *admiration*. These terms are, no doubt, correlative, and imply each other, but it is essential to examine their relationship, and ascertain upon what it is based. We think and talk a great deal more about the first, that is beauty, than about our admiration for it—in other words, we attend much more to the *objective* than to the *subjective* element. The same rule holds good in other codes. Sublimity is attributed to the object, awe is contributed by the mind; virtue is attributed to conduct, approbation is contributed by the mind. All these terms are relative, and imply their correlatives. Sublimity implies awe, and virtue implies approbation; yet we dwell much more on sublimity and virtue than on

awe or approbation, because the mind has, as it is termed, an objective rather than a subjective tendency. What, then, are these subjective elements of awe and approbation which attract our attention so little? for it appears that the inquiry should commence with them and not with their counterparts, the objective qualities. In investigating virtue, we should, as it seems to me, begin by asking, What is approbation, or the effect which virtue has upon us? In examining sublimity, we should begin by asking, What is awe, or the effect which sublimity has upon us? And in analysing beauty, we should begin by asking, What is admiration, or the effect which beauty has upon us? This, therefore, we shall do.

What, then, is admiration? It will readily be conceded that, like awe and approbation, it is a feeling of the mind, and nothing more than it is felt to be; there has been no dispute about that; but that is too general. What *kind* of feeling is admiration? for the mind has two kinds, and these two are not only different but at variance. The mind is subject to *emotions* and *sensations*, and all its feelings come under one or other of these two divisions. Sensations are colour, odour, flavour, sound, heat, cold, hunger, thirst, fatigue, repose, and such like; emotions are despair, anger, fear, remorse, joy, love, gladness, pity, excitement, and such like. Sensations are sometimes described as gross, sensible, organic feelings; and emotions as ideal, mental, sentimental feelings. Sensations and emotions are thus very different from each other, and are, in fact, as was said above, at variance. Now, to which of these two classes does admiration belong? I have no hesitation in asserting, what all must yield, that it belongs to the second class—that of emotions. A quality of beauty in an external object therefore awakens in the mind an emotion of admiration. But how can this be? Let us inspect the fact more closely. Nothing in external objects can be the *immediate* cause in the mind of anything but a sensation. One quality may produce colour, another

odour, another flavour, another heat, and so on ; but these are all sensations, and it is inconceivable that any quality of matter could be the immediate cause of an emotion in the mind, since otherwise brutes and the lower animals, who receive the same sensations as we do from the presence of objects, would also experience the same emotions, which they certainly do not. How, then, is the emotion of admiration awakened or induced by objects ? The process must evidently be mediate, indirect, reflex ; and as it is with one emotion so it is with all. They are necessarily the product of reflex action. They require an operation of the intellect, an exercise of the understanding, before they can be born in the mind. Before we can be angry or glad, joyful or dejected, we must employ our intellectual faculties ; we must interpret our sensations ; we must decipher external signs. A man may call me by the most opprobrious names in an unknown tongue, and I shall not become angry, because I cannot interpret my sensations ; a man may write me a letter threatening me with death, but in a strange language, and I am not alarmed, because I cannot interpret my sensations. You may caress a lobster for a long time without making it good-humoured, because it cannot interpret its sensations ; you may shout at a fly the length of a summer's day without terrifying it, because it cannot interpret its sensations. Note, however, the effect of such treatment on a more intellectual animal. Caressing makes a dog joyful, and threats make him fearful. Why ? Because he can and does interpret his sensations. An interpretation of sensations is therefore requisite to the production of all emotions ; and the more difficult the interpretation the higher and more rare will be the emotion. Emotion therefore presupposes intellect, and elevated emotions an elevated intellect. These remarks will, I trust, be borne out by an examination of the question before us.

We have reached the true psychology of the problem when we understand that one-half of beauty—viz., the

subjective element of admiration—depends upon an exercise of the intellect. But what does the objective element consist in? What is the condition in every beautiful quality? or is there any definable condition? If any such exist, it cannot, as we have already seen, be a sensible quality, for no sensible quality can be the immediate cause of an emotion, and we before found that the subjective or mental factor was actually an emotion. An object, therefore, which we call beautiful must be endowed with this quality, whatever it be, *by the mind*, and then resorted to again by the mind, as though the object possessed that quality inherently and independently. A rigid scrutiny of the matter would lead us to conclude that this quality had something to do with association, analogy, resemblance, or suggestion; in fact, it necessarily follows, that if a quality be not actually innate it must be associated. To this conclusion the latest speculations on the subject have conducted us, and I shall not cast about for a new hypothesis, but content myself with testing it inductively, since, moreover, after a long examination, I am convinced of its truth. Assuming then that this admirable quality in objects consists in suggestiveness, what laws does it obey, or can any rules or regulations be connected with the occurrence of beautiful phenomena? In answer to this question I shall put forth the following code, which has been arrived at through assiduous reflection on the subject, and proceed to prove each law by a subsequent analysis of the facts:—

1. The subjective element of beauty consists in the emotion of admiration.
2. The objective element of beauty consists in the quality of suggestiveness.
3. Beauty attaches only to utility.
4. The appearance of beauty varies inversely with the appearance of utility.

These four rules will, I think, be found upon examination to contain the explanation we are in search of in this department of psychology. In any event, they shall serve our turn till better ones have been discovered. We shall therefore deal with each of them separately.

CHAPTER II.

I. THE SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT OF BEAUTY CONSISTS IN THE
EMOTION OF ADMIRATION.

THIS proposition has already been partially elucidated, but must now be tested more severely. An operation of the intellect—an interpretation by the understanding—an exercise of the faculties, is the connecting link between the occurrence of a sensation and the emotion which follows it in the mind, as has already been shown. Now, in experiencing an æsthetic emotion, in admiring or recognising a beautiful quality, or whatever we choose to call the process, we cannot too carefully distinguish between the sensations which precede and the emotions which follow this operation of the intellect; for until their difference is made palpable and obvious, we shall be involved in continual confusion. All authors recognise the importance of the sense of sight in the appreciation of beauty; for colour is a sensation entirely dependent on the eye, and whoever is deprived of colour wants one of the essentials to appreciating beauty; and whoever has never seen shape or motion, but only felt them by some other sense, likewise lacks important material for æsthetic operations.

Colour is a sensation and therefore subjective; and, since we have already seen that admiration, which is also subjective, is an emotion, it follows that colour cannot in itself be beautiful. We often speak, however, of a "beautiful" colour, and it is unquestionable that certain

colours, or colours under certain circumstances, are charming and attractive. What, then, is meant by this? or how can a sensation be beautiful? The answer to this question is, that mere colour—colour *per se*—is never looked upon as beautiful, but that when that epithet is applied to colour, the object in which the latter is seen to inhere, its shape, motion, &c., are included in the cause of our admiration. Colour is a sensation, therefore mere colour—colour as colour—may be good, rare, pleasant, attractive, but never beautiful; it can only be felt to be pleasant, just as a taste or an odour is felt to be pleasant. There is much difficulty in making out this pleasure, but not much more perhaps than the pleasure of hearing or the agreeableness of certain emotions. On the mere ground of analogy alone, however, there is the strongest evidence for believing that the sensation of colour is pleasant or unpleasant. It would indeed be strange if the rule observed in all the other senses—that there should be pleasant and unpleasant sensations attaching to each—were found wanting in colour; if, that is to say, we should be capable of pleasant and unpleasant states of temperature, pleasant and unpleasant flavours, odours, and sounds, but not pleasant or unpleasant colours, but only indifferent ones—sensations which are neither attractive nor unattractive. When we come to compare the senses together and see the gradation which obtains in their power and mode of affecting the mind; when we find that they have a regular order of progression, those which are strongest as instruments of feeling being weakest as means of information, and those which afford the largest amount of knowledge being least potent as ministers of sensation, we are in a position to expect that hearing and sight, which close the latter class, should swallow up their sensible feelings in the intelligence they communicate; we should also be prepared to find, what is actually the case, that fewer persons have had the hardihood to question the pleasantness and unpleasantness of sound *per se* than the pleasant-

ness or unpleasantness of colour *per se*. The inverse-ratio principle is the key to the phenomenon to be accounted for, and this demurring or denying which we meet with is, in fact, a confirmation of the perfect gradation of the senses. Mere colour, therefore, being a sensation, cannot with propriety be called beautiful; and when it is so called, what is meant is either that the colour is a pleasant one to look at, *i.e.*, to feel, or else that the object to which the colour attaches is a beautiful object. We have no more right to speak of a beautiful colour *per se* than of a beautiful flavour *per se*. Colour, however, is so spoken of, and we ought to have some explanation of the phrase. Let us test the explanation proposed.

Scarlet is often spoken of as a beautiful colour, no doubt because it is organically pleasant to the eye—because the hue is attractive to behold; but if we mean more than this, we include more than colour. If we mean more than that the mere scarlet of the petals is a pleasant feeling, in calling it beautiful, we take into consideration the size, shape, and structure of the petals or the flower, and all that these suggest. This it is that really calls up our admiration. The difficulty of satisfactorily sifting the sensation from the emotion in every recognition of the beautiful is doubtless great. Nevertheless it must be done, and accurately too, since beauty refers to the emotion in the susceptibility, and not to the sensation in the sensibility. Mere colour as sensation must, like every other sensation—odours, flavours, sounds, &c.—be discerned as pleasant or unpleasant, attractive or repulsive, and it has no peculiar claim to the epithet beautiful.

Very seldom, never perhaps, do we look at pure bright colours without associating a multitude of things with the objects to which we find them attached; and straightway our emotion rises up and drives the sensation from the mind. It is difficult not to associate a variety of things with the rainbow, for its colours, shape, position, size, and arrangement are calculated to awaken various reflections

in the mind ; this being so, attention to mere sensation is out of the question. To experiment on colour as a sensation, we require a large shapeless mass of a uniform hue, which, however choice and pleasant the shade might be to the eye, could not without incongruity be styled " beautiful." We might, however, throw some bright colours or a large piece of a brilliant spectrum on a white screen in a dark room, and come near to testing our sensation of colour. Few audiences have witnessed this experiment without being ready to exclaim at the effect. But bring in a country clown and he will give a shout and perhaps a jump at the spectacle ; to him it will seem extremely gorgeous and striking, much more so than to a cultivated audience. Now, how is this ? The boor is less educated than the others ; he is fresh from the country, having seen little else than the green fields, the blue sky, and the white clouds ; he has not had the same means of forming associations with the colours of the spectrum as his cultured brethren who are evidently less affected by the sight ; his intellect is much thicker and slower than those of his scientific companions, and yet he is longer and more visibly impressed by the scene ; while they are passive spectators he is a delighted beholder.

How otherwise can this be, except that the sensation in the peasant's case being the highest and the emotion the lowest of its kind, the sensation asserts itself in the man's behaviour, filling him with an appetital desire towards the colours he feels. The figure and size of a spectrum (supposing it to be a rectangle or a square) are not calculated to beget many associations or suggest many resemblances, yet the colours being most pure and brilliant are held by all to be " very beautiful, very lovely." The only explanation is that intelligence, and therefore emotion, being under such circumstances at zero and sensation at the maximum, we *feel* the pleasure of the colour *per se* more acutely than under other circumstances. Let a single bright colour be thrown on the screen, and it also will be praised as good,

fine, lovely, &c., but the epithet "beautiful" would sound a little incongruous, since a large patch of uniform coloured light cannot be suggestive of much, cannot be nearly so suggestive as when coupled with an object which has definite shape and motion, and with which we associate design and a variety of purposes. If colour as a sensation were merely indifferent, and only attractive by association, children and clowns would be more insensible to bright colours than the old or the educated, because having a smaller experience to draw upon they have fewer materials for association. That the truth lies the other way, however, will need little argument to prove, for it is notorious how young persons and peasants are attracted by bright colours—by red flags, blue feathers, scarlet cloths, glittering insects, &c.—and how in the fulness of their gratification they commonly utter exclamations; and it is no less notorious how that cultivated understandings, especially those of a poetic and artistic turn, look at such things in a staid and thoughtful manner, deriving satisfaction, not from the colour as a feeling, but from what the coloured object suggests—in other words, being least subject to the sensations imparted and most alive to the emotions called up by the intellect.

Scarlet appears to be a particularly grateful and attractive colour, probably on account of its calorific effect upon the retina. A soldier in a scarlet coat, while walking along the street, is looked at by perhaps ten times as many persons as is a man in grey or brown or black. It would probably occur to many that scarlet is a stronger colour than black; that we see it more easily and at a greater distance; that, in fact, it causes a more pungent feeling in the mind. This, however, can hardly be the case; it by no means follows that because we like a sensation it is therefore stronger than one we do not like. It by no means follows that because children like sugar more than salt they therefore receive a stronger sensation from it. In fact, all our unpleasant sensations are more pun-

gent, or at least capable of greater intensity, than our pleasant ones, and that colour is no exception to this rule can, I apprehend, be proved by experiment. If a bright scarlet shawl and a black one were shown to a child before it had any associations with any particular colour and its opinion asked upon them, it would, I think, pronounce in favour of the scarlet; a fact which can only be explained by the difference in the sensations, scarlet being pleasanter than black. And if in after-life the child should come to look upon a black object as more beautiful than a scarlet one, which is not impossible, the cause should be sought for elsewhere than in the sensation created by the colour. That a pleasant colour, such as scarlet, is not necessarily felt more than an unpleasant one, such as black, may be demonstrated thus: let a man in scarlet clothes and a man in black walk away from us in the dusk, and the man in scarlet will disappear *before* the man in black. This fact has been proved over and over again, and may be shown in a variety of ways. Were it otherwise, were scarlet more visible than black, it would certainly be extremely foolish to clothe the army in a colour which would assist the enemy in discerning their mark. When we see a scarlet coat we fasten and feast our eyes upon it, but we could not discern it nearly so well as a black, a yellow, or a white one under similar circumstances.

It is certain also that bright colours not only pall upon us, but become positively painful if we get much of them. Those who have to do with colours professionally or otherwise, ladies for example who work in coloured wools, know to their cost what painful sensations bright colours are capable of causing. So it is also with flavours; for what child continues when grown up to like sugar as much as when it first tasted it? But as there are some flavours of a medium kind, as those of tea, bread, meat, &c., which never pall upon us though partaken of every day, so there are some colours of a moderate intensity, as those of sky-blue and grass-green, which are never un-

pleasant. Possibly these sensations please us by contrast by being seldom experienced. Townspeople are accustomed to grey, drab, and slate colour, to dingy brick, to smoky, dusty shades of brown, to faded red, to dun colour, to tin, lead, to the roads, the houses, the stones, and the mud. These shades, in fact, constitute the vast majority of their colour sensations, for most city folk are engaged in business, and most business is transacted in places where anything but high colours abound; to such persons, therefore, crimson roses, blue lobelias, and scarlet geraniums are a striking contrast, and may be pleasing on this account. The same may be said of odours and flavours, and indeed of all our sensations; for those which please most are precisely those which are least experienced and shortest in duration. How seldom do we hear melodious songs or a splendid organ compared with the rattle of hoofs, the noise of wheels, the clatter of heels, the shout of vendors, the hum of conversation, the barking of dogs, the rumble of trains, &c.; and how seldom do we smell a rose, musk, lavender, verbena, lilies, mignonette, compared with meat, and bread, and cheese, books, paper, clothes, clay, mortar, bricks, paint, wood, leather, silk, wool, ink, carpets, and all those things with which we are perpetually surrounded, and whose effluvia, though unrecognised, enters into the composition of the atmosphere we breathe. The same principle regarding colours, &c., in towns is, *mutatis mutandis*, applicable to the country. Rustics who seldom see more than certain shades of green, and brown, and yellow, together with sky-blue, are greatly delighted with strong hues of other and strange colours. It cannot be objected that positively painful sensations are as uncommon as positively pleasant ones, that a toothache, a headache, an earache, or a face-ache are as rare as sensations which we call very pleasant, and they are certainly not loved or longed for, but dreaded and detested. We are seldom suffering such pronounced tortures, it is true, but we are perpetually *gravitating* towards pain; if not actu-

ally suffering it intensely we are continually experiencing it moderately ; we are always *becoming* hungry, and thirsty and tired, if not actually so. Almost all our efforts are directed towards securing immunity from this tendency, and we succeed most when we experience the least pain or the greatest pleasure. Be this, however, as it may, it is by no means essential to the purpose in hand to have such metaphysical points decided. We therefore proceed to investigate the subjective basis of beauty.

Besides colour, another sensation which precedes every recognition of beauty is *shape*, and it is necessary to distinguish this latter sensation as well as the former from the emotion which ensues, and with which it might easily be confounded. Shape, or form as it is sometimes called, is, like colour, a subjective state—a feeling, a sensation in the mind—and nothing more ; for if it be more, how can we ever know anything about it ? We have only our senses as channels of information from things external to us, and if there be in any object external to us a quality that is not a sensation, how could we come by a knowledge of it ? It does not appear that we could ; and until some other answer be given we may assume that there is none to give. Mere figure, outline, colour in two directions, is given by the eye ; but for shape, that is matter in three directions, we require what is called actual bodily contact, without which all objects would appear to be in the same plane ; had we never felt or fingered anything spherical, an orange would appear circular but flat ; had we never felt anything cubical, dice would seem square but flat, and so on. But if shape be a sensation, some shapes ought by analogy to be pleasanter and more attractive than others ; and that some shapes are said to be more “ beautiful ” than others is a fact of which we are well aware. All writers on beauty acknowledge the excellence of spherical, round, spheroidal, oval objects, as contrasted with such as are square, angular, jagged, pointed, straight ; but there is much more in the phenomenon than this. Not only do

we approve of these qualities on reflection, we find the sensations pleasant when we see them; not only does broken glass offend the mind by association, it hurts the eye by contact.

But how can this be? Is it possible by scientific evidence to prove that certain shapes are intrinsically pleasant and others unpleasant? Is there any scientific reason for believing that round is a more sensibly grateful shape than pointed, or spherical than angular, for to this issue the matter must come? To understand the process let us glance back for a moment at colour. No object is seen except as coloured. Colour is a modification of light caused, as physicists tell us, by the wave vibrations of luminiferous ether, set up by the object which appears as coloured. All objects, other things being equal, receive an equal amount of light, *i.e.*, an equal amount of the seven colours of which light is composed. Some objects, however, have the power of absorbing all these colours, and those appear black; other objects absorb none, and those are white; others absorb an equal portion of all colours, and those are grey; and others, lastly, absorb them unequally, and those objects are coloured, properly so called. Ink, for instance, absorbs all colours equally, and therefore we see nothing but black or darkness; snow absorbs none, and therefore it presents us with all the colours as they fall upon it, and we see white; an orange absorbs all the ether waves except those which constitute orange colour, which it rejects, and which consequently we receive; grass absorbs all waves except those of the green; stones, wood, clay, &c., absorb certain colours in unequal quantities, and the residue, whatever it may be, returning to the eye, is a combination of the unequal quantities which are rejected. Objects, therefore, are painted on the retina by means of vibrating waves of luminiferous ether, set up by the objects themselves. Now, these vibrations causing colour may be modified in their distribution to, and in their effect upon, the retina by shape. They may be

uniform or gently graduated, and thus cause pleasant sensations through the optic nerve; or they may be irregular and abrupt, and thus cause unpleasant sensations through the same organ. Let us imagine an object radiating light-vibrations from all sides; that part which is in immediate opposition to the retina—like the muzzle of a gun pointed at a target—will send its vibrations most directly and with greatest strength to the nerves. We receive vibrations from every visible portion of an object, nevertheless those parts which are in antagonism to the eye, which flatly oppose it or which point towards it, will emit the strongest vibrations, and consequently will produce the strongest sensations. When collateral rays are excluded the retina is rendered more sensitive to those which remain, hence these will be more distinctly felt; in other words, the object will be more plainly seen. We all draw upon this fact when we look at anything through our hands, or through a roll of paper, or a cylinder; by protecting the eye from oblique vibrations, we make it more sensitive to the direct ones; all oblique vibrations are weaker than those to which the retina is diametrically opposite; from which it follows that when the object is gently graduated on all sides, the vibrations will be gently graduated also, and when the object is broken or irregular the vibrations will correspond.

Place before you a perfect sphere—say, a billiard ball—and what happens by this law? But one spot on the surface of the ball will be in immediate opposition to the retinal skin of the eye; the rays therefore from that spot will be the strongest of all, and the rays immediately around that spot will be the next strongest; and so on, by a series of concentric circles, the wave vibrations will become gradually weaker and weaker till they reach the perimeter of the ball, where they cease to act altogether.

Place a cylinder before you, and its vibrations will differ from those of a sphere in that, while the latter are graduated in all directions, the former are only gra-

duated in two; and though in a cylinder, as in a sphere and in everything else, there is only one spot directly opposed to the retina, yet that spot is in this object prolonged into a line more opposed to the eye than any other spot in the same section of the cylinder.

Again, place before you a square box, so that you can see one side almost directly and the top and another side obliquely; the strongest vibrations will come from the first, the side almost directly facing you, and they will be almost uniform, while those coming from the top and the other side will be weak and will decline gently away; and of these the strongest will come from the angles next the side which faces you. If you place the box so that two of the sides may be equally visible, the strongest vibrations will come from the ridge or angle between those two sides; and if you place it so that three sides be equally visible, the point of resistance, so to speak, will be the apex of the pyramid formed by those three sides—*i.e.*, the corner of the box.

Lastly, place before you now a bristling hedgehog, and note what follows. Each bristle will send forth a separate system of wave vibrations, arranged in the most abrupt manner. Take, for example, any one bristle pointing towards the eye: the point of this bristle will send out the strongest vibrations, and not only so, but no other part of the bristle will produce anything of a like effect, for the lateral surface of the trunk, not being opposed to the eye, can only transmit oblique vibrations to the retina, sending its direct vibrations in another direction. Take, again, another bristle—one that does not point towards the eye, but is parallel to the face: this bristle will send direct vibrations to the eye from a small but cylindrical surface; these vibrations, therefore, will be much less unpleasant than in the former case. But, again, there are a number of vibrations transmitted from the roots of the bristles, or their inner parts, until they are lost in darkness, and these will produce but little definite sensa-

tions, while out of this darkness spring the pointed bristles with the acutest of all vibrations. Hence we have in this object a series of vibrations of the most abrupt and irregular description, some being very strong and others in their immediate vicinity being very weak and almost unfelt—*i.e.*, relatively unfelt, for black is darkness, and nothing can be seen except as distinguished from darkness. These vibrations, and the laws under which they act, may be illustrated by pins or needles. If I take one pin and tap it on the point with my finger, I shall receive a painful sensation; if I take two pins, the sensation will still be unpleasant but less painful; but if I take half-a-dozen pins or more, with the points evenly arranged and close together, I may tap them hard and press them forcibly and receive still less pain. Bristling objects are like single pins, in their manner of sending forth vibrations; and even surfaces are like the pins with their points pressed close together. Smoothness and roughness are thus merely modifications of shape—shape of the parts as distinguished from the whole.

From these circumstances it necessarily comes that the spherical is of all shapes the most grateful to look upon, the angular less so, and the spiculated least so of all. Between these degrees innumerable grades and endless combinations intervene, of cylindrical, undulating, slanting, flat, curved, &c. Many experiments might be tried to prove that shape is a sensation, and that some shapes are organically more pleasant than others. Look steadily for about a minute at a heap of sharp stones or broken bottles, or a bush of thorns or rotten branches, or on a brush or a mat, and then upon a sheet of smooth water, a pane of plate-glass, a polished table, or a smooth wall, and the difference will be sensibly felt; passing from the sharp and rugged to the smooth and even surface you will experience a manifest relief. On the latter objects we love to let our eyes wander and linger, while on the former we require an effort to fix them with a steady gaze. Many

persons doubtless have observed how much more unpleasant it is to look at a pen when the point is turned towards the eye than when it is held parallel to the face and the cylindrical quill or barrel presented to the view, and this unpleasantness is by no means accounted for merely by the associations which cluster round a dangerous instrument in a menacing position. The emotion of apprehension is doubtless present and has its effect, but there is also a veritable sensation originating in the retina and conveyed by the optic nerve to the brain. This sensation is greatly dulled after years of repetition, and by the time we come to look for it it is not to be discriminated from the emotion which accompanies it, except after patient attention to delicate experiments. It was not always so, however; and it is reasonable to conclude that with children of tender years the phenomenon might easily be established. What happens in the case of adults who, having been born blind, are by a successful surgical operation made to see, or even who, after years of blindness, recover their sight, fully bears out these observations. To such persons sharp, pointed, angular objects are positively painful to look on, while flat, smooth, spherical ones are pleasant to gaze at. This is manifest from many tests and cases, and especially from the celebrated case of couching performed by Cheselden, which is quoted by so many philosophers. That eminent surgeon thus records the event himself:—"When he" (the patient) "first saw, he was so far from making any judgment about distance that he thought all objects whatever touched his eyes (as he expressed it) as what he felt did his skin, and thought no objects so agreeable as those which were smooth and regular, though he could form no judgment of their shape, or guess what it was in any object that was pleasing to him."¹

To us whose eyes have been in constant use since infancy such tangible and decisive results are impractic-

¹ Quoted by Sir William Hamilton, "Lectures," vol. ii. pp. 177, 178.

able. To us the sensitiveness of first impressions is forgotten and now unknown, and we must proceed by delicacy and patience if we would realise the true facts of the process. I am also disposed to believe that hard substances—flint, steel, stone, glass, &c.—send out stronger vibrations than soft substances—oil, butter, plants, wool, &c.—but this is a physical question which remains to be experimentally resolved.

Not only the eyes, however, but also the ears are subject to pleasant and painful sensations, from objects at a distance; and here again it is only under abnormal circumstances that we can experience decisive results. Those who live in cities and towns are accustomed to all sorts of noises at every hour of the day, and though their organism is sufficiently sensitive to such sounds to hear them distinctly, it is sufficiently deadened to hear them with indifference. With country people, accustomed to the dead unruffled quietude of fields, and hills, and plains, it is very different, and on coming up to town such people are often bewildered, upset, and rendered sleepless by the never-ceasing din of business. Far worse is it for those whose ears having been stopped up for a lengthened time have their hearing suddenly restored to them. Surgeons know full well how to such persons the most ordinary sounds are positively excruciating, and that the noise of a cart in the street, of a dog barking, of a door shutting, of hammering or knocking, or even of a voice talking loudly, is such torture that the hearer is fain to have his ears stopped up again temporarily at least. We unconsciously carry about with us the accumulated results of our past lives, and in order to arrive at the truth we must divest ourselves of this accumulation and begin again—*hoc opus, hic labor*. The action of light renders the optic nerve less sensitive to light, the action of shape renders it less sensitive to shape, and the action of sound renders the auditory nerve less sensitive to sound; we must therefore endeavour to recover that lost sensitiveness before we

can appreciate the phenomena aright. We are, however, constantly drawing unwittingly upon the fact that certain shapes are sensibly pleasant, for where utility is not interfered with we choose smoothness and roundness before other shapes. Smokers do not care to smoke in the dark; why? partly because they do not see the round wreaths of curling smoke as they ascend in soft and gentle volumes to the ceiling. Shape, therefore, *per se*, is no more a thing of beauty than colour *per se*.

But lastly, *motion* is also a sensation, and when we have realised this great fact, together with the two previous ones regarding colour and shape, we are in a position to inquire into the nature of beauty, but not till then. The same reasoning that applied to colour and shape, applies to motion. By the fundamental law of metaphysics we are incapable of knowing intuitively any object, or any quality of an object, external to us. What we know intuitively is a modification of our own minds; what we believe of necessity is an unknown cause of that modification. Now, motion, in every form in which we are acquainted with it, is a modification of our own organism, and finally a feeling in the mind. That the motion of a bird flying through the air is a mere sensation in us, it may indeed be difficult for many persons to believe; but it is first absolutely necessary to remember, what is incontrovertible, that the bird itself, its size, colour, shape, are mere sensations of the mind, caused by something, we know not what, and we know not how. How then can motion be more real or independent than that which causes it? To be assured of the subjectivity of motion you need only stand on the bank of a stream and gaze steadily for a while on the water flowing by; having done so, look as steadily on the bank at your feet, and you will see a stream of sand or grass, or whatever the bank consists of, flowing in the opposite direction; and what will appear most peculiar, the bank, though it seems to flow *on*, never seems to flow *away* from the spot at which

you are looking, nor to leave any gap behind. From this it will be understood, that motion is just as much a species of vibration set up in the retina, as are shape and colour. But why, after looking at the motion of the stream, should a motion in an *opposite* direction be set up in the bank? For precisely the same reason as the eye after contemplating a particular colour is rendered more sensitive to the *complementary* of that colour. After looking steadily at red for instance, the retina becomes more sensitive to greenish-blue, the complementary of red; after looking at violet, it becomes more sensitive to greenish-yellow, the complementary of violet; and so on; and whenever the complementary colour is to be had, the eye will pick it out in preference to any other. White, for example, contains all colours; if therefore you look steadily at a red wafer, or a bit of sealing-wax, or at the petal of a red flower, and then on a sheet of white paper, a portion of the retina being now sensitive to greenish-blue will *pick that colour out* of the white, and you shall see on the paper a patch of greenish-blue, of the same figure as the red object. We are capable of a variety of very singular experiments of this kind with regard to light and colour. Similarly, motion in one direction being set up in the retina, the nerves become more sensitive to motion in the contrary direction—*i.e.*, to the complementary motion—and after looking steadily at the running stream, the eye calls up an opposite motion in the still bank.

Thus much being premised, little remains to be said concerning motion or its value in æsthetic experiences, since very much the same remarks apply to it as have been predicated of shape. Motion must describe a certain figure, and as figure is shape of two dimensions, it follows that the same rules which govern pleasant and unpleasant shapes will apply to pleasant and unpleasant movements, for the vibrations must correspond with the figure whether the figure be caused by an object or by its motion. Circular, serpentine, undulating, uniform movements will there-

fore be pleasant, and angular, abrupt, and irregular movements will be unpleasant; and slow and gentle motion will be more grateful than fast. The first class of movements are called graceful, the second ungraceful. Compare, for example, the sweeping curve of a rocket with the irregular shooting of forked lightning, and say which is pleasantest to the eye; compare the ups and downs of the blades in a sawmill with the rotating of the wheels in the machinery or with the water-jets of a fountain; compare the angular charging and counter-charging of football players with the sliding and winding of a party of dancers or with the curving and sweeping of a crowd of skaters; compare the motion of a carriage, an omnibus, or a train with that of a steamer, a yacht, or a canoe; compare the pointed motions of a billiard ball or a weaver's shuttle with the rounded gliding of a pigeon or a goldfish; compare the thrust and parry of the bayonet in military exercise with the floating folds of a royal standard or the waving of a tree's branches, and then say whether in each of these cases the graceful and grateful do not accompany the circular, serpentine, or undulating motion and the unpleasant the angular.

It appears, then, that in a recognition of the beautiful neither colour, shape, nor motion are anything more than sensations in the retina. We must not, however, suppose from this that the retina is the only field of such sensations. True, colour can only come in by that entrance, but both shape and motion are set up in us in every part of the body; in other words, the whole body itself is an object endowed with the qualities which cause shape and motion in the mind; and though the shape and motion with which the eye furnishes us are very much more extensive than what we get through any other part of the body, they are also of a much less accurate and reliable description. Now, with the pleasant sensations of colour, shape, and motion, as with all other pleasant sensations, there is co-existent with the organic feeling an appetital or animal

propensity for the sensation ; this appetite, of course, has but a faint and delicate influence, and being, in fact, but the active side of the sensation itself, is not easily recognised ; but if the sensation be pleasant at all, its pleasure implies the existence of an appetital impulse, however much that impulse may be repressed by reason or otherwise ; and I call attention to it now in order to get the emotion of admiration clear from every trace of sensuality.

The results to be registered from the foregoing considerations are, first, that colour is a feeling in ourselves, and in so far as it seems to be a quality in objects it is we that make it, and are by our nature necessitated to make it, seem so ; and, secondly, that shape and motion are likewise sensations in ourselves, and so far as they appear to be a quality or condition of objects, it is we that make them, and are necessitated to make them, appear so. Everything, in short, which we suppose to be a quality in objects, is no more than a feeling in our own mind, the consequence of a modification of our sensitive organism caused by something external to us ; but as to what this causatory something is, we have not the smallest information, and neither it nor its sensible effects in the mind has any right to the epithet " beautiful."

Pass we now from the sensational to the second and only other class of feelings of which the mind is capable, viz., the emotional ; let us turn from organic to inorganic, from corporeal to spiritual affections. Every sensation influences us in some degree, either greater or less, and by so doing calls up an emotion of a greater or less intensity. It is a psychological impossibility that we should be perfectly indifferent to any of our sensations, for if they are neither a source of direct harm nor of direct benefit to us, they may be a source of negative harm or of indirect benefit, *i.e.*, of knowledge. We regard each one of our sensations with something of hope or fear, of love or repugnance, of admiration or disgust, of awe or contempt ; and while in some cases the emotion is almost imper-

ceptible, in others it seems to occupy the mind to the exclusion of sensation, reason, and will. A clear and distinct appreciation of the emotion of admiration is quite as necessary as a clear and distinct appreciation of the sensations which precede it in the mind; for on this clearness and distinctness much of our subsequent investigations will depend. Except in infancy we never look upon an object with perfect impartiality; we always think of its utility or its inutility, and are affected according to the estimate we form; if we know not what the object which we see is, we are puzzled and inquisitive, and therefore unhappy, till we do know. The sensations which objects cause on the retina are very delicate, and under ordinary circumstances removed from intensity; the emotions, on the other hand, which these same objects call up often reach a high degree of intensity, and in fact generally obscure by their presence the sensations that forerun them. When a peasant and a poet look at a single bright star shining in the sky, they both have the same sensations; but while the former can think of nothing but the colour, size, and brilliancy of the object, and is consequently but little affected by emotion, the latter is carried off at once into the regions of imagination, and revels in the countless suggestions which the orb awakens in his fancy; and he is thereby led to admire the object to such a degree that he presently becomes quite oblivious to his sensations. To the peasant the star is very bright; to the poet it is very beautiful. Beauty is a relative term, implying admiration and something that is admirable. The subjective side of beauty is this emotion of admiration consequent upon the suggestion of pleasant sensations. To speak, then, of the emotion of beauty or of the emotion of sublimity is irregular and erroneous phraseology; there is an emotion of *admiration for* beauty and an emotion of *awe for* sublimity, an emotion of disgust for ugliness and of contempt for meanness; but there is no emotion of beauty or of sublimity, and it is quite as improper to speak

of such as it would be to speak of the emotion of ugliness or of meanness.

Let us further distinguish the emotion from the sensation in a recognition of the beautiful. Suppose you were to see something of a silvery green and blue colour glittering in the distance, and were unable to guess what it was, you would doubtless think the colours rare and lovely; you could come to no other conclusion, because the sensations were organically pleasant while you confined your attention to them; but when you remember the important fact that you are ignorant of the nature of the object, this consciousness of ignorance causes curiosity, and curiosity, if it be not appeased, breeds unhappiness. In this state of things, therefore, you have little inclination to take pleasure in the colours you see; you are ill at ease, and must be so till you learn what the object is. On approaching nearer to it, you discover that the object is a serpent coiled up on a mossy stone and flashing back the sunlight from its skin. Note now what ensues. You still have a variety of pleasant sensations, a combination of choice colours, a tapering cylindrical shape, and altogether an object whose sensible qualities are decidedly grateful; you experience, however, little or no admiration for the thing; your abhorrence of the reptile is the predominating feeling in your mind; a thrill of horror and hatred runs through you, and you are ready to destroy the animal forthwith. This emotion bids fair to swallow up all other feelings, and, in fact, completely minimises your pleasant sensations. Suppose now that you were mistaken in the object, and that on coming up closer you find it to be a kingfisher, what a change comes over your mind! You now admire the object from every point of view; let loose your fancy and give your imagination wings; you wander off into the region of poetic similitudes, conjuring up suggestions and piecing out analogies, till you are again almost unconscious of your sensations.

Thus, it will be seen, we never look impartially at an

object—i.e., we never take the optic sensations as they come for what they are worth in themselves; we always look behind and beyond them—calculating, considering, comparing—so that the dullest and quietest sensations of sight may produce the strongest emotions, and the keenest sensations of sight the faintest emotions. A hungry boy does not *admire* a piece of bread-and-butter, because the estimate he forms of it leads him to *desire* it; a nervous person does not *despise* a wasp or contemplate its organism, because the estimate he forms of it leads him to *fear* it. So we may pronounce a flower very beautiful until we learn that it is a deadly poison, after which our estimate will lead us to consider it detestable, though the sensations are the same for one verdict as for the other. The emotions with which we contemplate an object, being thus dependent on the estimate we form of the object, are capable of undergoing a complete reversal upon an alteration of our knowledge of it, upon a change of the associations with which we invest it. The grateful sensations of pleasant colours are supplanted and submerged by the emotions awakened by the associations connected with the subject of those colours as a whole.

These remarks may be further illustrated by certain coincidences noticeable in the appreciation of colours by different nations. It is observed by Alison that black, in England the colour appropriated to mourning, is there a disagreeable colour; but that in Spain, and ancient Venice, where it was the dress of the great, it was looked upon as attractive; that white in England is extremely beautiful, because it is emblematical of innocence and cheerfulness, while in China it is disliked because it is there appropriated to mourning; and that yellow, which in the latter country is the imperial hue, is there a favourite colour, while in England, where it is associated with nothing in particular, it is beautiful or not according to circumstances.¹ Black is intrinsically the least attractive of all colours,

¹ On Taste, essay ii. c. 3.

and is indeed no colour at all, but the absence of colour, and no better than darkness. It is, therefore, only as distinguished from black that any colour can be seen; and hence scarlet, as we saw before, disappears in the distance before perfect black; white, on the contrary, is the pleasantest of all colours, and is indeed, like the light of the sun, a combination of every colour in equal proportions. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." That shades so dull and degraded, however, that we have not thought it worth while to honour them with names, should come to be objects of praise and admiration, is indeed remarkable; the strangeness, however, is explained when we learn that this artificial esteem is generated by artificial association. "A plain man," says Alison, "would scarcely believe that the colour of a glass bottle, of a dead leaf, of clay, &c., could ever be beautiful; yet within these few years, not only these, but some much more unpleasant colours that might be mentioned have been fashionable and admired."¹ This was written about a century ago, and in the passage it will be noticed that a bad colour is properly alluded to as 'unpleasant;' for by whatever artificial associations we may be led to praise one colour above another in certain objects, the organic sensations must ever be constant whether coming from a lady's shawl or from clay. It cannot be too often reiterated that colour *per se*, irrespective of figure, shape, or motion, can never be an object of admiration, any more than can odours or flavours. The emotion is best experienced when the sensations are absent. We could not enjoy "L'Allégo" or "Il Penseroso" when walking in the country and witnessing the scenes which they describe as much as when sitting in our study or our parlour, perhaps in darkness and solitude. We could not enjoy Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark" aright while listening to the bird itself and watching it hovering in the sky. I verily believe such poems were composed in

¹ On Taste, essay ii. c. 3.

bed on a sleepless night, or while sitting solitary, or walking lonely, and far removed from the original impressions of sense, if poets would only confess it. Not only, therefore, are the sensations in a recognition of the beautiful subordinate in every case to the emotion of admiration, but, having once affected the senses, their presence becomes an obstacle and a hindrance to the emotion.

Lastly, the emotion may be clearly distinguished from the sensation, in that it can in some cases be induced where the sensation has never existed. Men born blind, for example, may, by hearing certain colours eulogised continually, come at length to regard with admiration objects which they are told possess those colours. In such cases the sensation of colour was never seen, felt, or experienced in any way, and yet its mention is the signal for the emotion of admiration, which, though it may be fainter and more indefinite than that induced by sight, is nevertheless the same in kind with all admiration, which is nothing more than a species of love.

Summing up the foregoing remarks, we find that an object of sight first of all causes several simple sensations in us—*colour, shape, and motion*, to wit; secondly, that each of these sensations are species of vibrations in the retina; thirdly, that each of them may be pleasant or unpleasant in themselves; fourthly, that in no case can any of these sensations be themselves beautiful or ugly; that neither individually nor collectively can they as sensations be admirable or disgusting, and therefore that they form neither the objective nor the subjective element of beauty proper; that they are mere corporeal feelings, animal affections, and being carefully sifted and discriminated from the emotions which follow them, may be dismissed from our further consideration. And we find, lastly, that the emotion of admiration is capable of being called into existence by the presence of an object of beauty, in other words, by sensations which are not, and

should not be termed, beautiful. To the solution of this problem the remainder of the present chapter shall be devoted.

The second great class of feelings, that called the emotions, does not differ from the class called sensations in degree; it differs in kind, the two classes being, in fact, radically diverse and intrinsically inconsistent. How, then, can an object, as a whole, be capable of producing an effect altogether different in kind from that which any of its parts are fitted severally to cause? What is the relation of an emotion to a sensation? Can any number of sensations constitute an emotion? Can like produce unlike? How is it that on looking on a primrose and receiving from the flower nothing but sensible impressions, I nevertheless admire it as beautiful? The answer to these questions must be found in the fact that the emotion is entirely due to the link which connects the two feelings—the sensation and the emotion; in other words, to an *operation of the intellect*. The intellect it is which takes hold of the sensations and so manipulates and disposes them that their ultimate combination produces in the mind that particular feeling called admiration. An activity of the intellectual faculties is therefore necessary to every appreciation of beauty, to every emotion of admiration; and as it is with one emotion so it is with all. They are all due to an operation of the intellect, by which we are led to estimate the value of our sensations. Every propitious estimate of the intellect is followed by an agreeable emotion of greater or less intensity, and every unfavourable estimate by the contrary. Bearing these facts in mind, then, we shall find little difficulty in accounting for the admiration which is consequent on the recognition of beauty.

If the emotion of admiration enters into the composition of every recognition of the beautiful, it follows that whenever that emotion is impeded, destroyed, or obscured, the appearance of beauty is impeded, destroyed, or obscured

also. This coincidence, in fact, frequently occurs, for the mind may be so occupied by another emotion that that of admiration is altogether smothered. I may be in a garden of the choicest flowers, the most delicate plants, and the rarest shrubs, and yet, if I am full of anger at the conduct of a friend with whom I have just quarrelled, I cannot admire either the flowers, the plants, or the shrubs : I have no room in my mind for such an emotion ; all the lesser and more delicate emotions are swallowed up by the larger, stronger, and more absorbing one of anger. That feeling consumes everything else ; it burns in the mind like a fire, and while it lasts, admiration must remain below zero. Let the experiment be tried, and if any one asks me if such a flower is not very beautiful, I reply, "It *may* be very beautiful, but I do not care about it ; I am too angry to admire it ; I cannot think about such things, and I do not care whether they are beautiful or not." In other words, I do not deny that the object is beautiful ; I believe that it appears beautiful to others, that it has appeared beautiful to me, and may appear so again ; but being unable to contemplate it now, I am not conscious of any admiration for it. This coincidence is incontrovertible and but common sense. The stronger emotion always overwhelms the weaker, and admiration is a weak emotion while anger is a strong one ; for "to be wroth with one we love doth *work like madness* in the brain."

By and by, when I become cool, when anger has subsided, and the still small voice of reason is heard, I shall be open to the softer affections of the soul, and shall admire that sweet little lily of the valley and appreciate its perfect, pure, and tranquil aspect, and contrast it with my own recent consuming vexation. But who could walk through a museum, an exhibition, or a bazaar, filled with fear at some approaching calamity, with sorrow for some new misfortune, or with remorse for some late transgression gnawing at the vitals of his mind, and at the same time

admire the beauty of the objects around him? The same remark applies to great delight or joy; for admiration of beauty is a delicate emotion and cannot hold its own against those which are capable of much greater intensity. When delighted at some piece of good luck or overjoyed at some brilliant success, we are as little at leisure to admire ferns, and buds, and butterflies, as when torn with hatred or despair: we have greater matters to think about, and therefore we have stronger emotions to experience. When enraptured by the preaching of an eloquent divine, we do not care to linger on the tracery of the pulpit or the foliage of the capitals; those things fade away in our estimation; they dwindle, sink, and disappear, until we are altogether oblivious of their existence; we become unwilling to be reminded of their presence, for they confuse and interrupt us; we have something better to think about, we have greater matters in our mind; at some other time, when the service is over, when our intellect is disengaged, when nothing absorbs our thoughts, we shall come and admire the sculpturing and moulding, but we cannot do so now. From this it follows that to experience admiration for beauty, the understanding must be unshackled and at leisure.

This middle factor, the connecting link between the sensations and the emotions—viz., the exercise of the intellect—calls for a passing notice. The appreciation of beauty, according to the foregoing propositions, requires intelligence, and if upon examination it be found that some sentient creatures do not exhibit that appreciation, we may conclude that they want the requisite amount of intelligence, or are possessed of a lower order of mind than those who do exhibit such an appreciation; and, further, if we find that some persons exhibit that appreciation in a lower or less perfect manner than others, we may conclude that their intellect has been viciously or imperfectly developed. And is not this the case? Brutes undoubtedly exercise their understanding and interpret

their sensations quite as certainly as we do; yet they apparently never exhibit any emotion of admiration or any appreciation of the beautiful; their intellect is too small or too barren to endow an object with the qualities which, as we shall presently find, cause admiration; consequently, those qualities not being inherent in the object itself, brutes are unable to draw upon them at all. So also savage races and ignorant people either have very depraved notions concerning beauty, or else have none at all. They may have a code of beauty, but to us it is an atrocious one; they may admire certain objects and certain arrangements, but to us such objects are hideous and such arrangements are abominable; they may admire black teeth, and blacken them accordingly; they may admire the absence of teeth, and knock them out accordingly; they may admire flat heads, and flatten them accordingly; they may admire saucers in their ears and "sprits" in their noses, and insert them there accordingly; they may admire tattooed skins, and tattoo themselves accordingly;—but civilised nations regard these codes of beauty as monstrous, the result of lamentable ignorance and degraded understandings. Howbeit similar barbarisms still cling to the skirts of culture and refinement in the form of compressed feet, high heels, false hair, wasp waists, powder, pomatum, hoops, and other monstrosities, permanent or periodical; but persons of large intellect or a liberal education never adopt or admire such deformities.

Again, the lowest classes in every community, the uneducated mob, the dregs of the people, are always looked upon as holding paltry or perverted views concerning beauty, or as actually incapable of experiencing true æsthetic emotions. We do not look for an estimate of genuine grace or an appreciation of correct symmetry among those who can neither read nor write; but, on the other hand, we listen with attention to whatever is uttered on these matters by the learned and the wise, although their learning and wisdom lie in quite another direction.

It appears, then, that education and mental discipline are requisite to create the qualities which we call beautiful, and to exert the faculties so as to produce the emotion we term admiration, and that the truth of the æsthetic code or standard in any country, community, or class varies with the standard of education in that class, community, or country. If any confirmation of this position be required, let it be found in the fact that we have all of us sometimes failed, I think, to appreciate genuine beauty at first sight; that we all trace back some portion of our admiration to the teaching of a friend who, by having called our attention to certain features or qualities, has presented an object to us for the first time in such a light that it has ever since appeared beautiful.

Let it never be forgotten, however, that some educated persons are comparatively destitute of æsthetic susceptibility, almost incapable of admiration or awe; to these persons the most beautiful flowers are but coloured vegetation, the most beautiful birds but feathers and fowl, the most beautiful sunsets but clouds and light, the finest music but runs and vibrations, and the best poetry but fanciful circumlocution. Whether these persons have risen *above* such delicate experiences, and can afford to look down upon them as effeminate affections, I shall not stop to inquire. Certain it is that men differ as much in mind as in body; and as some are impressed to ecstasy with the beauties of nature, so others have scarce the least admiration to accord to such things, and marvel how their fellowmen can concern themselves about sentimentality, vagueness, and abstractions. Such minds have no share in the formation of codes of beauty, and are necessarily disqualified from criticising; they are in the minority, and their peculiarities need not be consulted in investigating the beauties of the flowered or the feathered tribe, the potent pathos of music, or the fine sublimity of song. Admiration, though not experienced equally by all, does nevertheless exist, and constitutes a powerful force in human

nature—a force which it would be idle to ignore and folly to deny. Let us therefore inquire into the occasion of this emotion, for that admiration *is* the subjective element proper in a recognition of the beautiful, and unnecessary further to be dwelt on, I shall by this time take leave to assume. We now proceed to the objective element proper.

CHAPTER III.

II. THE OBJECTIVE ELEMENT OF BEAUTY CONSISTS IN THE
QUALITY OF SUGGESTIVENESS.

THE objective element of beauty—and the same applies to all æsthetic phenomena—is the quality of suggestiveness; and it is the response of the intellect to this suggestiveness which causes the emotion of admiration. Of course, when I speak of a suggestive quality being objective, I do not imply any necessary objectivity, but merely that which the mind itself has previously endowed the object with. This endowing by the mind of suggestive qualities is done by what is called *association of ideas*. We see a certain object, and we recollect certain sensations which we believe to co-exist in that object, and which we have before experienced in connection with it; we see it of a certain colour, and we recollect something else of a similar colour; we see it of a certain shape, and we recollect something else of a similar shape; we see it with a certain motion, and we recollect something else with a similar motion; that is, we associate with the object before us, its colour, shape, or motion, other objects with their colours, shapes, or motions not before us. This postulate can only be established by analysis: to analysis, therefore, we proceed.

Beauty is twofold—natural and artificial; and the artificial seems to consist in imitating the natural; natural beauty, therefore, shall engage our attention first. Suggestive qualities, being attached by the mind to the object, operate afterwards by a reflex action whenever the object acts upon our appropriate senses and the mind is at leisure

to allow such reflex action to take effect. A beautiful quality is one which, directly or indirectly, proximately or remotely, suggests, not *communicates*, a pleasant sensation; and where there is no such suggestion there is no beauty—no admiration. I must assume that some objects are beautiful before I inquire why they are so. I must assume that certain plants, flowers, insects, fruits, birds, animals, and scenes are beautiful, or more beautiful than others. I shall assume, for instance, that a maidenhair fern, a primrose, an orange, a tortoiseshell butterfly, a swan, a squirrel, and clear sunsets are specimens of beautiful plants, flowers, fruit, insects, birds, animals, and scenes; and having made this assumption, I shall endeavour to prove that these things are beautiful by their suggestiveness, and by no other quality or means.

The maidenhair fern is beautiful because of its suggestiveness, and whoever has endowed it with the greatest number of suggestions, having a basis in pleasure as before mentioned, will experience through the reflex action of those suggestions the largest admiration and will find the object most beautiful. What, then, does this fern suggest? Evidently a great and complex multitude of things; let us specify some of them. The maidenhair fern may suggest the "chequered shade" when we are walking in a spacious grove on a summer's day and the sunlight is seen filtered by the leaves above, and the heat screened by interlacing branches; it may suggest a bunch of young and tender grapes; it may suggest the feathers on a thrush's breast or in a peacock's tail—soft to touch, warm to wear, or pleasant to look at; it may suggest the spray of a fountain turning to descend in drops and curving in a natural sweep; it may suggest the spangled sky on a starlight night, or when the moon's face is veiled from naked brightness by intervening trees and verdure, or it suggests a piece of lace delicate in texture and excellent in pattern and execution; but what necessity is there to go beyond the name of the plant itself? With its delicate dark

stems it may suggest the flowing locks of a maiden's hair, glittering in the light or lifted by the breeze, when, "winnowed by the gentle air, her silken tresses darkly flow," which, whatever be the origin of the name, may easily have been suggested to those who gave it its present appellation. If a beautiful quality does not consist in this reflex suggestiveness, it is difficult to discover in what it does consist.

The principle here contended for would seem to hold good in all kindred qualities, in all æsthetic emotions—awe, contempt, disgust. Let us try sublimity: a peasant and an astronomer, both looking at the moon, receive the same sensations, yet how different the emotions in the mind of each! They both see a circular disc of silver light, diversified by certain bright and shaded patches; but these sensations, which to the peasant are the basis of a few narrow or ordinary thoughts, are to the philosopher food for a thousand reflections passing "the flaming bounds of Place and Time." The former thinks of the orb as a luminous body in the sky about the size and distance of the sun, appearing at intervals and giving light by night, and beyond this the object is little or nothing to him. The latter, on the other hand, looks upon it as a satellite with a magnitude about one-fiftieth smaller than that of our earth, as two or three hundred thousand miles away, and revolving round our globe by very peculiar movements; he looks upon its lines and patches as mountains and valleys, cliffs and volcanoes; he looks upon it as the chief cause and regulator of the tides; he looks upon it as travelling in implicit obedience to the laws of gravitation inherent in itself, in the earth, in the sun, and in all the heavenly bodies; he looks on it as an agent transmitting borrowed light; he looks on it as a means of calculating the distance of the sun from the earth and of solving many other important astronomical problems; he sees in it the Artemis of the Greeks and the Diana of the Romans; and he recalls the mythological

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stories and poetic associations attached to this orb in the imaginative literature of the ancients; and thus to him the moon becomes very sublime. Now it is evident, as Berkeley long ago observed, that none of these suggestions are in the moon itself, else would the peasant experience them as well as his companion; they must therefore be attached to the object by the mind, and subsequently drawn upon as original qualities. It would be easy to trace this principle in ugliness and meanness, but the process is obvious and unnecessary; we therefore return to beauty.

If it be objected that a fern, being the work of nature, could not originally have suggested lace, which is a work of art, I answer that the fern, therefore, could not originally have been so beautiful as it is now. This suggestion is in addition to its other suggestions: that a plant now suggests a work of art is no reason why it should not originally have suggested works of nature alone.

Let us take another example of beauty, say a primrose. A primrose is beautiful because of its suggestions; to those to whom it suggests many pleasant things it is very beautiful, and to those to whom it suggests scarcely any it is hardly at all beautiful. But what can a primrose suggest? A primrose, in the first place, may suggest its own sweet fragrance, while in the next place its form suggests a variety of other flowers to which it bears a greater or less resemblance — the primula, polyanthus, pansy, violet, cowslip, anemone, cineraria, for example. Its colour is pure and bright and pleasant, and thus may, with its shape, suggest a variety of other objects of a similar pure and bright colour. It may suggest cream, or pine-apple, or ivory, and the many beautiful articles into which that commodity is wrought; it may suggest the unblemished human skin; it may suggest a little butterfly lighted on a bank and fanning its wings in the warm air; it may suggest a bright button, or a pretty shell on the sea-shore, or a "rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear." It is like a

coin, or a gold or silver medal, or a glowworm radiating its beams in all directions, or it burns like a candle shining in the dark, or like a "good deed in a naughty world;" it mellows like a planet rising through the shade, suspended in heaven, steadfast, silent, and divine; or, lastly, it may suggest the sun himself, the source of light and heat and life. To a poetic mind it might suggest a hundred other things, but these I have mentioned will serve our purpose. Now it is such suggestiveness as this, and such alone, that constitutes the objective element of beauty. Let a boor and a poet both look at a primrose, and each will have the same sensations of colour, figure, and shape. Consider, however, the difference between the subsequent effects of these sensations in the two minds, and then inquire in what this difference consists if not in the number of suggestions and the amount of emotion consequent upon them. To a poet, the flower, besides begetting wonder and awe at the perfection of its workmanship, and the intricate simplicity of its structure, which reaches sublimity, will suggest images, resemblances, analogies, associations, and reminiscences of the type called pleasurable; to the boor it will suggest nothing perhaps except its own odour. Wordsworth puts it well when he says, "A primrose by a river's brim a *yellow* primrose was to him, and it was *nothing more*." It is this fertility of suggestiveness that constitutes a poetic mind, and the absence of it that causes the want of poetic appreciation. If this proposition be true and the above examples be held correct, it were superfluous to go through the other objects before named with a view of proving that the beauty in each case consists in suggestiveness. Poetry appears to be nothing more than the liberation of beautiful analogies. A poet must first have a variety of experiences; he must then combine, associate, compare, and elaborate them, so as to express in language what he already feels as unworded truths, as latent suggestions, as hidden influences.

But it may be objected, can we have suggestions which we

do not recognise or associations which we do not perceive? I reply, Multitudes; and a little reason will convince us of this fact. We cannot have *feelings* which we do not feel; we have the feelings but we do not recognise their *cause*. Suggestions, analogies, resemblances have passed through the understanding and operated on the soul, but with such celerity that their presence was never detected though their effect was felt; it is a recognition of these analogies when expressed by others that constitutes a genuine appreciation of poetry. In reading Milton's "L'Allégro" or "Il Penseroso" for the first time, we recognise the similes and metaphors as the unnoticed causes of former feelings in our own mind, and we rejoice in the elaboration by another of what we never could have elaborated for ourselves. When we come across such miniature eclogues as are contained in the following expressions in the first of the above-named poems—"Laughter *holding both his sides*; the lark *startling* the dull night, from his *watch-tower* in the skies, till the *dappled* dawn doth rise; the cock, with lively din, *scatters the rear* of darkness thin, and *stoutly struts* his dames before; the eastern *gate*, where the great sun *begins his state*, *robed in flames* and *amber light*, the clouds in thousand *liveries* dight; mountains on whose barren *breast* the *labouring* clouds do often rest; towers and battlements *bosomed* high in tufted trees; the *chequered* shade; the spicy *nut-brown* ale; the *busy hum* of men; ladies whose bright eyes *rain influence*; against *eating* cares; *married* to immortal verse; the *melting* voice through *mazes running*; the *chains that tie the hidden soul* of harmony," &c.; or when we encounter the following in the second of the above-named poems—"The *gay* motes that *people* the sunbeams; looks *commercing* with the skies, thy rapt soul *sitting in thine eyes*; forget thyself *to marble*; a sad, *leaden*, downward cast; Philomel will *deign* a song in her sweetest, saddest plight, *smoothing the rugged brow* of night; the *wandering* moon *riding* near her highest *noon*, *like one*

that had been led astray; oft as if her head she bowed stooping through a fleecy cloud; the curfew's sullen roar; such notes as drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek; civil-suited morn; kercheft in a comely cloud; a shower ending with minute drops from off the eaves; pine or monumental oak; the bee with honeyed thigh; the dew-feathered sleep; storied windows, casting a dim religious light;"—when, I say, we meet with such idyllic epithets as these, do we not seize upon them as our own by prescription, though we never before contemplated the expressions? Do we not claim the resemblances as old friends whom we have long known by the tones of their voice but whose faces we had never before beheld? Do we not recollect that we have felt all their influence before, but have never arrested the thoughts which produced them, have never introduced those influences to the understanding, were never able to clothe them in appropriate language, or perhaps to utter them at all?

It need not surprise that we should thus feel the effect of activities we do not recognise while physical science is full of similar facts. Physical philosophers tell us that colour is caused by light vibrating variously on the retina, but always with incredible rapidity, the swiftest vibrations being those caused by violet, which gives six hundred and ninety-nine millions of millions per second, and the slowest being those caused by red, which gives four hundred and seventy-four millions of millions per second! "Thus the sensation of red is produced by imparting to the optic nerve four hundred and seventy-four millions of millions of impulses per second, while the sensation of violet is produced by imparting to the nerve six hundred and ninety-nine millions of millions of impulses per second. At this prodigious rate is the retina hit by the waves of light."¹ Not only has mankind for thousands of years been entirely oblivious of this fact, though daily experiencing its effect, but even now those who know and believe it are as far

¹ Professor Tyndall, "Notes on Light," p. 35.

from realising it in perception as any of our ancestors were. The like remarks apply to sound, and probably to all sensations. It need not excite incredulity, therefore, if we find activities in the intellectual faculties of whose *modus operandi* we are unconscious, since even the senses themselves present us with performances so inconceivably marvellous.

When we look at the sun setting, our mind is the unconscious recipient of a vast number of suggestions, the unwitting subject of a crowd of latent associations. Let us disentomb a few of them in the interests of psychological beauty. "The clouds that gather round the setting sun" may suggest sparkling fountains, or the spray of waterfalls, delicate heaps of swansdown, great volumes of wool, or hills of everlasting snow; they may suggest lace curtains, clusters of crystal, jasper, diamonds, gold and silver ornaments burnished and blazing; they may seem like a glittering strand, or foam on a stream, or the sea breaking on the shore; they may look like ladders bridging chasms of the sky, or like lighthouses or watch towers; they may suggest waves of milk, fleecy feathers from angels' wings, celestial robes and veils, or a silver wilderness of rocks; by and by they may suggest a raging furnace, or a conflagration, or a volcanic eruption, and the melting and seething of rocks and cliffs and mountains. All these similes are not present to the mind *in words*, no doubt; nevertheless we are filled with the combined effect of hundreds of such suggestions, and we feel their presence though we can discriminate but a few of them, should we go home and read a poet's liberation of such analogies—and we might find a precedent for each of the above named—we should at once recognise the likeness, though we ourselves could never have transcribed the scene in terms so faithful or so fine. The effect of latent influences is felt every day, and especially when any great emotion seizes hold upon the mind. If we hear suddenly of the death of a dear friend, we are instantly

thrown into a paroxysm of grief by reason of the united effect of the multitude of *latent* suggestions which the event embodies; for we do not, we cannot, immediately calculate or state in words all the consequences of the calamity, or foresee in a moment the various and immeasurable ways in which the misfortune will assert itself, in different places and in different persons, for many months to come. Most of our permanent modifications of character are due to latent and obscure but very potent influences. We read a book on logic, and by and by forget its details completely, yet we apprehend and reason better ever afterwards; how, we do not perceive. We read a work on elocution and forget its rules, yet we speak and read more correctly ever afterwards; how, we do not perceive. We hear a sublime speech or sermon, and forget every maxim it inculcated, yet our aspirations are higher ever afterwards; how, we cannot tell; we only know that such things affect us permanently. Thus it is that "histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend;" but how, we cannot tell; the influences are latent and the suggestions undefinable.

All minds are not, of course, equally poetical; the faculties of some are adapted to seek after and appreciate analogies much more than others; but if the analogies be not present in some shape, forming part of our own experience, there will be no beauty and consequently no admiration; no sublimity, and therefore no awe. Milton's classical allusions in "Paradise Lost" may be very admirable for others, but if I am not conversant with the literature of ancient Greece and Rome, I cannot recognise the justness of the similes; I cannot discern any analogy; I do not understand, and therefore I do not admire, the images; while at the same time I may be quite capable of admiring sculpture and painting and flowers. Every several class of beauty, therefore, requires a several education.

POETRY THE LIBERATION OF BEAUTIFUL ANALOGIES.

It is the people's part to experience beautiful analogies, it is the poet's province to liberate those analogies, and it is the people's again to appreciate them. Poetry consists, as was before stated, in the liberation of beautiful analogies; and as poetry covers a very large section of beauty, it will be worth while and very proper to inquire more particularly into the truth of this position. Poetic analogies may be divided into four great classes, according to the character of the suggesting subject or of the suggested object—viz. :

1. Physical phenomena which suggest physical phenomena.
2. Physical phenomena which suggest moral phenomena.
3. Moral phenomena which suggest physical phenomena.
4. Moral phenomena which suggest moral phenomena.

I think, upon a close analytical examination, the spirit and essence of all poetical passages will be found to resolve themselves into one or other of these four classes. It is no part of my purpose to trespass on the domain of ethics, and as the second and fourth of the above divisions are complicated with moral questions, it will be necessary to guard against being led astray, beyond what is essential to the task in hand, into that tempting but forbidden territory. Having scheduled a number of poetical passages,¹ let us parcel them out under the above heads, and endeavour to show that each is poetical because of its liberation and elaboration of beautiful analogies. We shall consider the four classes in order.

IST CLASS — *Physical phenomena suggesting physical phenomena.* This class comprises those passages in which

¹ The purpose in citing the following and other passages from the works of poets being analysis and not admiration, the passages are printed as prose, and the analogies they contain are italicised by the writer.

physical objects and actions are made to suggest other physical objects or actions. This is much the easiest department of the art, and the wealthiest in analogies, many of which, however, are very obvious: a star suggests a diamond and a diamond a star, flowers suggest each other, bird suggests bird, and so on. This is incipient poetry. Let us now see how recognised poets deal with this physical beauty. Oranges have been already mentioned; how does the orange enter into poetry? Through the analogies which may be fathered on it, and no otherwise. Its appearance while hanging on the tree in the shade reminds Marvel of "*golden lamps* in a green night." Let us take another object of beauty, a star, for example. Stars receive a bountiful measure of attention from the poets: with Shelley the midnight sky resembles a "*mantle grey star-inwrought*," wrapping the form of night; while Shakespeare finds "that the *floor* of heaven is thick *inlaid with patines* of bright gold." Keats likens a bright star to a solitary hermit, or nature's "*sleepless eremite . . . watching with eternal lids apart*;" and Campbell calls the evening star "*companion* of retiring day." Both these last analogies are complicated with ethics.

Birds with their songs are an inexhaustible mine of similitudes. Note Shelley's treatment of the skylark: with him the song and soaring motion of the bird suggest "*a cloud of fire*" springing up from the earth, a "*star of heaven*" heard but unseen—as Shakespeare had previously told us that even the smallest star "*in his motion like an angel sings*, still *quivering* to the young-eyed cherubins"—the empty air, being filled with the music, suggests a bare night, when "*from one lonely cloud the moon rains out her beams*;" the notes are *drops* "*from rainbow clouds*." Then the bird is "*like a poet* hidden in the light of thought, . . . *like a high-born maiden* in a palace tower, . . . *like a glow-worm golden* in a dell of dew, . . . *like a rose embowered* in its own green leaves;" its song suggests the "*sound of vernal showers* on the twinkling grass" or "rain-awakened

flowers"—music to which "*chorus hymeneal* or triumphal *chaunt*" is but an empty vaunt, compared with which "*all treasures that in books are found*" would be inferior.

Flowers form another class of great physical beauty. When Wordsworth looks at the daffodils, they seem like a crowd, a host, "*fluttering and dancing* in the breeze, continuous *as the stars*;" ten thousand he saw "*tossing their heads* in sprightly dance." Note the similes which, in the same author's hands, cluster round the daisy—"a *nun* demure, of lowly port; a sprightly *maiden* of love's court; a *queen* in crown of rubies drest; a *starveling* in a scanty vest; a little *Cyclops* with one eye; a *silver shield* with boss of gold; a pretty *star*, with glittering crest *self-poised* in air," &c.; and when all this analysis of association is ended, we go back to synthesis again as the proper cover for these similitudes—"Sweet *flower*! for by that name at last, when all my reveries are past, I call thee, and to that cleave fast."

Complex scenes in nature are, as might be supposed, a bottomless ocean of poetic beauty. Shelley's lines written in the Euganean Hills will be found instructive in this respect—"The *waveless* plain of Lombardy" is spread before him "*like a green sea*," not unbroken by land, but "*islanded* by cities fair." Venice, the theme of so many apostrophes and the embodiment of so many types, is here "*ocean's nursling*; *ocean's child* and then his *queen*." These ideas lead to mythology and "*Amphitrite's destined halls*." The sun upsprings behind the city from a "*chasm of light*," while the towers and spires become "*obelisks of fire*, pointing from the altar of dark ocean, as the flames of sacrifice" arose of old in Apollo's time; noon descends, and the soft purple mist is "*like a vaporous amethyst* or an *air-dissolved star*;" on the plains below lie leaves "*where the infant frost* has trodden with his *morning-winged feet*," while the vines, red and golden with their trellised lines, pierce the "*dark-skirted wilderness*;" and in the south is dimly seen the "*olive-sandalled Apennine*." This is true

poetry; but what more is it than a tissue of beautiful analogies, suggestions, resemblances, associations, or whatever we like to call them? Thus, also, when Keats would speak of a fall of snow, he introduces it into a sonnet as "the new soft-fallen *mask* of snow upon the mountains and the moors." Wordsworth, when he would describe a landscape in the Far West, speaks of scarlet flowers that "*seem to set the hills on fire*," and of "many an endless, endless lake, with all its *fairy crowds* of islands, that together lie as quietly as *spots of sky among the evening clouds*." What more admired passage of physical phenomena suggesting physical phenomena can be found than that in which Milton makes a "sable cloud *turn forth her silver lining* on the night"? And yet what is there in this except the suggestion of inanimate objects and actions by other inanimate objects and actions? Byron beholds the midnight moon "*weaving her bright chain o'er the deep, whose breast is gently heaving as an infant's asleep*." Allan Cunningham, in a sea-song, speaks of the "*snoring breeze*," and calls the ship "*a hollow oak, our palace*." Campbell, celebrating England's naval greatness, speaks of "the *meteor* flag of England," and resembles the men-of-war to "*leviathans* afloat" carrying guns with "*adamantine lips*." The glittering spears of an armed host are with Byron "*like stars in the sea* when the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Gallilee;" to Milton they suggest standing corn—as when Satan, hemmed in by the angelic squadrons, is described as surrounded "with ported spears, as thick as when a *field of Ceres*, ripe for harvest, waving, bends her *bearded grove of ears*."

Female form and features are of course a staple theme, and female dress is often praised. Waller's lines on a girdle are well known; and how does he describe that article?—"the *pale* that held my lovely *deer*." Herrick calls attention even to a "*winning wave* deserving note in the *tempestuous* petticoat." Lodge's ode to Rosaline is

much in point: the lady's hair is "*like to the clear in highest sphere*;" her eyes are "*sapphires set in snow*—her cheeks are like the *blushing cloud*" of early morn; "her lips are like two *budded roses whom ranks of lilies neighbour nigh*—her neck is like a *stately tower* where Love himself *imprisoned* lies—her breasts are *orbs of heavenly frame*," and Love "at her eyes *his brand doth light*." Carew, on the other hand, warns us against the frailty of bodily charms, reminding us that "he that loves, a *rosy* cheek, or a *coral* lip admires, or from *starlike* eyes doth seek *fuel* to maintain his *fires*," will see his charms waste away as time advances. Another poet likewise reimonstrates—"It is not beauty I demand, a *crystal* brow, the *moon's* despair, nor the *snow's daughter*, a white hand, nor *mermaid's* yellow pride of hair. Tell me not of your *starry* eyes, your lips that seem on *roses* fed, or breath that softer music speaks than *summer winds* a *wooing flowers*. What are lips? *Coral* beneath the ocean stream, whose brink when your adventurer slips, full oft he perisheth on them. And what are cheeks but *ensigns* oft that wave hot youth to fields of blood?—eyes can *with baleful ardour burn*; *poison* can breath that erst *perfumed*; there's many a white hand holds an *urn with lovers' hearts* to dust consumed."

The foregoing passages may serve to illustrate the first division of poetic labour—the elaboration of analogies in which one physical phenomenon suggests another. This is the simplest mode of beautifying objects, and perhaps the richest department of illustration. The effect too of such similes or metaphors is agreeable; but it is not to be supposed that the above citations are uncomplicated with moral associations; many of them, in fact, contain an admixture of ethics, though that admixture is inferior and subordinate—the most obvious images being purely inanimate. Analogies, to be poetic, must be beautiful. They must embellish the subject or illustrate its parts in an elevating manner. If this be done, there will be poetry

though the passage be written in prose; if this be not done, there will be no poetry though it be written in verse. In the latter case, however, if the analogies are ingenious, there is wit, of which more by and by. Let us now pass to the second division of the psychology of poetry.

2ND CLASS—*Physical phenomena suggesting moral phenomena.* This division is that in which a physical object, agent, or action, instead of a physical, suggests a moral object, agent, or action. All poetry abounds with these analogies; some of them are very simple, as when Wither speaks of his "chamber of *neglect*, walled about with *disrespect*;" others of them are highly complicated; and indeed we seldom read many lines of good poetry together without encountering a moral analogy or passing over an ethical substratum of some sort or another. An example will explain. Suckling in his ballad of "The Wedding" thus describes the feet of the bride while dancing—"Her feet beneath her petticoat, like little mice *stole* in and out, *as if they feared the light*." Here the comparison of feet to mice belongs to the first class of analogies—a physical object suggesting another physical object—a foot suggesting a mouse, and the motion of dancing suggesting the motion of a mouse running in and out of a crevice. These analogies of themselves would not constitute an overwhelming compliment to a lady, since the animal to which her foot is compared is one which most persons regard as vermin, and which they generally desire to exterminate. When, however, the analogy is continued until the animal's *mind* is reached, and the mouse's timidity and nervousness is made an object of comparison, we enter upon completely new ground; for, believing that mice have minds because their conduct resembles our own in certain particulars, we do not stop at brute mentality, but are carried on at once to human feelings, and we think of bashfulness, modesty, refinement, and virtue, as traits of female character; and thus the whole passage is saved from being mere wit, and

is more than redeemed by one touch of a moral with which all can sympathise.

If there be no element of beauty or virtue involved in the allusion, we cannot call the passage poetical, however we may be tickled by the wit. There is poetry in comparing the sun rising to "a *bridegroom* coming out of his chamber," and *rejoicing* "as a strong man to run a race," though the passage is in prose. In the following suggestion bestowed upon the dawn,—"*Like a lobster boiled*, the morn from black to red began to turn,"—there is no poetry though the passage is in verse. There is, however, wit in this last illustration; and herein consists the difference between a witty and a poetic allusion,—that the latter is ingenious and beautiful, while the former is ingenious merely. In wit you will find nothing elevating or ennobling in the sentiment, so that however you may smile at it as ingenious, you cannot admire it as beautiful. Look, on the other hand, at the host of admirable reflections which crowd the mind of Burns on turning up a field-mouse's nest with the plough—"Wee sleekit, *cow'rin*, *tim'rous* beastie, O what a *panic's* in thy breastie! I'm truly sorry man's dominion has broken *nature's social union*, and justifies that *ill opinion* which makes thee startle at me, *thy poor earth-born companion and fellow-mortal*. Thou may *thieve*. What then, poor beastie? Thou maun live. A daimen icker in a thrave's a *sina' request*. Thou *saw the weary winter* comin' fast, and cosie here beneath the blast thou *thought* to dwell. That wee bit heap o' sticks and stibble has cost thee mony a *weary nibble*. Now thou's turned out for a' thy *trouble, but house or hald*, to *thole* the winter's sleety dribble. But, mousie, thou art no thy lane in *proving foresight may be vain*: the best-laid *schemes o' mice and men* gang aft *agley*. Still thou art *blest compared wi' me!* the present only toucheth thee; but och! *I backward cast my e'e on prospects drear, and forward though I canna see, I guess and fear.*" All these associations are just and appropriate, and arise

naturally out of the subject in hand. If, however, the suggestions are but remotely connected with the original, or if they have the appearance of being hunted after and compelled to come in, the passage, however lofty in other respects, will not elicit equal admiration. Therefore it is that Burns' "Ode to a Mountain Daisy" has not attained, in the appreciation of the best judges, to equal honour with its companion on the mouse—the episode having somewhat the appearance of being created for the similes rather than the similes for the episode.

We before saw that a petticoat suggested physical phenomena to Herrick; we shall now find that in the same lyric a much humbler article of dress, a shoestring, suggests a moral phenomenon to the same poet—"A careless shoestring, in whose tie I see a *wild civility*, doth more bewitch me than when art is too precise in every part." It would be difficult to bring together two greater extremes without falling into the category of wit, and, perhaps, absurdity. Shelley is just and poetical when he installs Death as *brother* to Night, and Night as *parent* to Sleep; but suppose he had gone a step farther—suppose he had spoken of Death as Sleep's *uncle*. How grotesque would have been the effect! A really just physical analogy is often heightened by a slight dash of moral colouring. When the author of the sea-song before quoted from compares the vessel to an eagle, he is poetical; but when he adds, "Like the eagle *free*, away the good ship flies," he superadds the moral element of liberty and free will, and brings the passage under the division we are considering. With Moore, the vessel quits its country slowly and with reluctance, while "her *trembling* pennant still looked back to that dear isle 'twas leaving; so turn our hearts, as on we rove, to those we've left behind us." To the same poet the stars suggest tearfulness—"At the mid-hour of night, when stars are *weeping*, I fly to the lone vale we loved." To Lovelace they suggest a vigilant sentinel—"Like to the *sentinel* stars I watch all night."

To Shelley a star near the moon suggests a minister supplying light from the sun—"That one star which to her almost *seems to minister* half the crimson light she brings from the sunset's radiant springs." With Milton "all the stars *hide their diminisht heads*" when the sun appears. To Keats they suggest steadfastness—"Bright star, would I were *steadfast* as thou art;" while the seas it looks down upon, lapping the coasts, are like priests washing the feet of pilgrims—"The moving waters at their *priest-like task of pure ablution* round earth's human shores." To Wolfe, in his "Ode on Sir John Moore's Burial," the moon *struggles* to send her light down to earth, for the interment takes place by the "*struggling* moonbeams' misty light;" and so, for a similar reason, Shelley asks that orb, "Art thou *pale for weariness of climbing* heaven and *gazing* on the earth, *wandering companionless*?" The echoes of music suggest to Moore the higher echoes of love—"How sweet the answer echo makes to music at night! . . . Yet *love hath echoes truer far*, and far more sweet, . . . when the *sigh that's breathed for one to hear* is by that one, that only dear, *breathed back again*." Mark how the music in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, teems with suggestions for Wordsworth, when, reverberating through "that branching roof, *self-poised* and scooped into ten thousand cells, where light and shade *repose*, . . . the music *dwells lingering and wandering on as loth to die, like thoughts* whose very sweetness yieldeth proof that they were *born for immortality*;"—the sound has ceased and is gone; but no, for "from the *arms of silence*, list, O list, the music bursteth into *second life*; the notes *luxuriate*, every stone is *kissed* with sound or *ghost of sound* in *mazy strife*." To the same poet, moreover, the skylark, that prolific progenitor of similes, is an "ethereal *minstrel, pilgrim* of the sky, . . . type of *the wise*, who soar but never roam." Shelley sees something more than human in this bird; it is a happy *soul*—"Hail to thee, blithe *spirit*, bird thou never wert. . . . Thou dost float and run *like an unbodied*

joy whose race is just begun. . . . Like a *poet* hidden in the light of *thought singing hymns unbidden till the world is wrought to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.*" So, likewise, the cuckoo to Wordsworth is "no bird, but an *invisible thing, a voice, a mystery*; . . . thou bringest unto me a *tale of visionary hours*, . . . the same whom in my schoolboy days I listened to, . . . and thou wert still a *hope, a love*; still longed for, never seen! and I can listen to thee yet, . . . till I do *beget the golden time again.*" The linnet with the same author is a blood-relation of the tree he sings in—"a *brother* of the dancing leaves." For Wordsworth, too, the daffodils enter into a dancing contest with the waves beside them, and emulate them to some purpose, for "they, . . . a *jocund company*, . . . *outdid* the sparkling waves in *glee.*" Metaphors from kinship are favourites, and much availed of by poets. We have heard Shelley call Venice ocean's *nursling*, her *child*, and her *queen*; in his "Hymn to the Spirit of Night" he says, "*Thy brother* Death came and cried, Would'st thou me? *Thy sweet child* Sleep, the filmy-eyed, murmured like a noontide bee." Note the complex suggestion (metaphor and simile in one) in this last sentence: Sleep is a *child* that murmurs *like a bee*. The same poem furnishes us with another complication, where "the *weary* day turned to his *rest*, lingering *like an unloved guest.*" The climax of this species of analogy is, perhaps, reached in a short poem by the same author, where many agreeable emotions are felt and much kissing is carried on by winds, and rivers, and fountains—"See the mountains *kiss* high heaven, and the waves *clasp* one another; no sister flower would be *forgiven* if it *disdained its brother.* And the sunlight *clasps* the earth, and the moonbeams *kiss* the sea; what are all these kissings worth if thou kiss not me?"

The foregoing citations are surely beautiful and poetic; but the beauty of the poetry consists in the suggestions which are liberated. We have assurance of this both from the poems themselves and from the acknowledg-

ments of their authors. "There's a tree," says Wordsworth, "of many, one—a single field, which I have looked upon; both of them *speak of something that is gone*." Whether these physico-moral analogies are more beautiful than those of the first class or not may be a question; certain it is they are of a higher order, since they not only adorn a phenomenon but "point a moral." We pass to the third division.

3RD CLASS—*Moral phenomena suggesting physical phenomena*. This division comprises allusions to inanimate objects or actions instigated by some moral theme. Here, therefore, we break up new ground, for the principal subject is no longer a bird, or a flower, a star, a place, sound, &c., but age, youth, love, innocence, fidelity, contentment, calamity, fortitude, death, futurity, and other ethical conceptions, which, while being described, are sought to be embellished by a reference to physical phenomena—a process the converse of the class immediately preceding, where moral phenomena were employed to set off the objects and actions of inanimate nature.

In a poem on "Youth and Age" we might expect some illustrations of the division in hand. Let Coleridge speak, for he has a much-admired lyric on that theme: "When I was young life *went a-Maying*, . . . Hope clung *feeding like a bee*. . . . How lightly then it *flashed along like those trim skiffs* unknown of yore, . . . that ask no aid of sail or oar. . . . Love is *flower-like*; Friendship is a *sheltering tree*. O the joys that came down *shower-like* of friendship, love, and liberty e'er I was old. . . . O Youth! it cannot be that thou art gone; thy *vesper-bell* hath not yet *tolled*, and thou wert aye a *masker* bold. . . . So think I will that Youth and I are *housemates* still." Lamb refers to the lone widower as a cripple who "'reft of wife, thenceforward *drags a maiméd life*." Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" contains a striking analogy of this class, where we are told that "we can make our lives sublime, and, depart-

ing, leave behind us *footprints on the sands of time*." The love between the sexes, when spiritualised into worship, is likened by Shelley to the desire of the "*moth for the star, of the night for the morrow*"—curious examples of allusions at once complex and reflex. The lover pouring his secrets into the "gentle bosom" of the loved one is, with a certain anonymous author, "*like the care-burthened honey-fly that hides his murmurs in the rose*." Illustrating the evanescence of love, Campbell supplies us with the following quatrain of analogies: "Bind the *sea to slumber stilly*; bind *its odour to the lily*; bind the *aspen ne'er to quiver*; then bind love to last for ever." The evils that assail youth and the calamities that wait on age are by Cowper compared to worms—"A *worm is in the bud of youth and at the root of age*." When Wordsworth is happy life is delightful, and the "*glorious world fresh as a banner bright, unfurled*." Lord Bacon is sad, and thinks that "*the world's a bubble, and the life of man less than a span*"—a sentiment which predominates with poets, for the race is mostly melancholy. "Earth *seemed a desert* I was bound to traverse," says Lamb; and for Shelley life is a "*deep, wide sea of misery*," over which sails the "*frail bark of this lone being, . . . and its ancient pilot, Pain, sits beside the helm again*." Most of these barks of life are lost amid the "*solid darkness black*;" but some redeem themselves, only, however, as Byron tells us, to be mocked and disappointed: "The few whose spirits *float above the wreck of happiness* are driven o'er the *shoals of guilt or ocean of excess*; the *magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain the shore* to which their shivered *sail* shall never stretch again." A great and good life is like a phenomenon from another world: "Thy soul was *like a star*, and dwelt apart, . . . pure as the *naked heavens*, majestic, free," says Wordsworth to Milton. The same author, when he beholds the Highland girl of Inversnaid, the spirit of the home, wearing on her

forehead the "freedom of the mountaineer," living in a "bondage sweetly brooked, a strife" which gave her "gestures grace and life," thus expresses himself analogically: "*So have I, not unmoved in mind, seen birds of tempest-loving kind, thus beating up against the wind.*" "Lockseley Hall" might be expected from its theme to be replete with analogies of this class. The following are a few that present themselves to Mr. Tennyson: "The centuries behind me *like a fruitful land* reposed. . . . All the *current* of my being *sets* to thee. . . . Love took up the *glass* of Time, and *turned* it in his *glowing hands*; every moment lightly *shaken ran itself in golden sands*. Love took up the *harp* of Life, and smote on all the *chords* with might; smote the chord of self, that trembling *passed in music out of sight*. . . . A sorrow's *crown of sorrow* is remembering happier things. . . . 'Tis a purer life than thine, *a lip to drain thy trouble dry*. . . . The nations do but murmur, *snarling at each other's heels*. . . . The *Parliament* of man, the *Federation* of the world. . . . They to whom my foolish passion were a *target* for their scorn. . . . All thy passions matched with mine are *as moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto wine*." We now pass to the fourth class.

4TH CLASS.—*Moral phenomena suggesting moral phenomena.* In this division of analogies the main subject to be illustrated is the same in kind as that in the preceding class—viz., a moral conception; but instead of being adorned by physical, it is set off by moral ornaments. This order of composition is the appropriate province of prose;—the suggested metaphor or simile being less an ornament than a lesson; we, therefore, begin here to trench upon ethics, and the examination must not go far. A moral, like an article of food, is in general too weighty and useful in itself to serve for embellishing anything else. Consequently we shall find that even where a

moral is resorted to for the sake of beautifying, it is often rather some physical surrounding than the moral itself which is of service in illustrating.

When Henry Vaughan, lamenting the advent of old age, and longing to be young again, says, "My soul with too much stay *is drunk and staggers* in the way," it would seem to be the physical phenomena of drunkenness—reeling about, loss of vision, &c.—rather than the moral condition of incapacitated degradation, that serves for illustration. The following from Coleridge is nearer the mark—"Where no hope is life's a *warning* that only serves to make us grieve . . . with *oft and tedious taking leave, like some poor nigh-related guest that may not rudely be dismissed, yet hath outstayed his wonted while, and tells the jest without the smile.*" Few will deny the felicity of this illustration, or its value as an example of the analogies we are considering. The main moral is the grievous warning of life without hope, the ornamental moral, a poor relation prolonging his accustomed visit until he becomes a nuisance. The rarity of our hours of bliss suggests to Campbell "*angel-visits few and far between;*" though perhaps it is in the imaginary appearance of an angel coming down in person to pay a visit to earth that the real source of the beauty lies. Similarly when Milton represents Virtue as overcoming severe temptation by divine assistance, and says, "If Virtue *feeble* were, *Heaven itself would stoop to her,*" it is an Almighty Being stooping down, or an everlasting arm stretched out from above, that presents itself to our minds. There is, nevertheless, in these examples, of which hundreds more might be collected, a moral thought *adorning* a moral thought, and as such they are entitled to a special notice here.

That poetry consists in the liberation of beautiful analogies is apparent not only from the above passages, collected as they were almost at random, and chiefly from Mr. Palgrave's "Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics," but also from the avowals, implied or express, of poets

themselves upon the subject. The highest authorities have given it as their opinion that the essence of their art consists in bringing to light the latent but influential suggestions, the hidden but ennobling resemblances of nature; in successfully communicating to mute, material things the attributes of sentient beings, or in endowing lower objects with the qualities of higher. Some minds recognise these suggestions much sooner than others, and these are poetic minds; others not only recognise them sooner, but express them appropriately, and these are poets; but apart from the recognition of these resemblances there is no poetry. The analogies are our own manufacture, and, if our intellectual faculties are so proportioned, we can clothe almost every object with them. Poetic appreciation and poetic power are thus original features in the arrangement of the intellect, and therefore it is truly said that "a poet is born, not made."

Let us take the opinion of authorities on this point. We cannot do better than listen to leading men of the profession—men who have a right to speak; for even if their asseverations are inconclusive, their admissions at least will be instructive. Let us hear Shakespeare on the universality of poetic material. An exile schooled in "the uses of adversity," living a life exempt from public haunt, will (as any one in fact may, if he be poetic) find poetry everywhere, find "*tongues in trees, books in the running brook, sermons in stones, and good in everything*;" while he who is not poetic, or is not at leisure to indulge his poetic capacity, will, though nourished in palaces and surrounded by courtiers, find "all the uses of this world . . . *weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable*," will find this "brave o'erhanging firmament . . . a pestilential congregation of vapours," &c.

Let us hear Marvel on the reflex action of the poetic impulse. All poetry is due to "the *mind*, that ocean where *each kind does straight its own resemblance find*." These resemblances are, however, pieced out and built up

into new combinations and appearances by the intellect, which "*creates, transcending these, far other worlds and other seas.*"

Let us hear Wither on the subjectivity of poetic inspiration. The art of poetry was made known to him by the Muse while the poet was still a stripling, and more than this he does not recollect—"In my former days of bliss, her divine skill taught me this, that from *everything I saw* I could some *invention* draw, and raise pleasure to her height through the *meanest object's* sight. By the *murmur of a spring* or the *least bough's rustling*, by a *daisy*, whose leaves spread, shut when Titan goes to bed, or a *shady bush or tree*, she could more infuse in me than all nature's beauties can in some other *wiser man.*"

Let us hear Wordsworth on the origin of poetic similes—"With little here to do or see of things that in the great world be, sweet daisy, oft I *talk* to thee, for thou art worthy. . . . Oft in the dappled turf at ease I sit and *play with similes, loose types of things* through all degrees, *thoughts of thy raising*, and many a fond and idle name I *give to thee* of praise or blame, as is the humour of the game while I am gazing." Wordsworth was aware of two great facts: first, that he himself had endowed the flower with resemblances; and secondly, that the flower reminded him afterwards of those resemblances, and thus appeared to be an original source of poetic beauty; he therefore points for the original of his analogies, at one time to his own fancy, and at another to the flower itself. There is no need to wonder then why this poet employed so many illustrations from human nature for the purpose of embellishing the dumb creation, or the vegetable kingdom, for has he not endowed them one and all with human sympathies and human instincts? Has he not invested flowers with human feelings?—"The budding twigs spread out their fan to catch the breezy air, and I *must think*, do all I can, *that there was pleasure there;*" "*'tis my faith that every flower enjoys the breath it breathes;*"

"to me the meanest flower that blows can give *thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears*;" and if they are too deep for tears, they are certainly too deep for words. Such, nevertheless, as are not too deep for language may be snatched by the poet from the "eternal silence," and given to the world for a perpetuity as "*truths that wake to perish never*, which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour, nor man, nor boy, nor all that is at enmity with joy, can utterly abolish or destroy." Poetic material, it cannot be too often reiterated, is everywhere at all times, if only the intellect be fitted to fashion and employ it. A poetic mind will find a story in every beautiful object, not because the object is beautiful, but because the mind is poetic. "O reader! had you in your mind such stores as *silent thought* can bring! O gentle reader! you would find a tale in everything!"

Let us hear Shelley on the psychology of poetic conception. The poet deals in superior abstractions, "nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses, but feeds on the *aërial kisses of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses*." It might at first sight seem as if this passage contradicted the whole doctrine put forward above regarding poetry, and that it pointed to an external and eternal beauty independent of "mortal blisses," and having an ultra-human existence. Such language, however, is itself metaphorical, and refers to the unworded suggestions *latent* in the mind. Strictly interpreted, the verses express a metaphysical impossibility. Shelley's meaning I apprehend to be this:—The poet trades in analogies, which are a purely intellectual creation, have no existence in nature, are subjective and brain-begotten; these analogies, however, are manufactured from the ideas which, entering the mind through the senses, have become objects of definite contemplation. The poet does not inquire into the structure of a flower, like a botanist; nor into the organism of a bird, like an anatomist; nor into the chemistry of a landscape, like a geologist; nor into the ingredients of

colouring, like a painter. No ; he is wholly taken up with analogies ; he sees the objects of nature and admires them ; his attention does not tarry on or penetrate the sensible qualities of matter, but goes off at a tangent into the regions of resemblance. The sequel to the above-quoted passage is a powerful confirmation of this explanation, where it is said that the poet "will watch from dawn till gloom the lake-reflected sun illumine the yellow bees in the ivy-bloom, *nor heed nor see what things they be, but from these create he can* forms more real than living man, nurslings of immortality."

Not only, therefore, are there millions of suggestions sealed and latent in the mind of almost every one, but in that of the poet they are beyond measure multitudinous, and well-nigh innumerable. The poet may dig down deep into the depths of his own soul and bring up "beauties that the earth *hath lost*," but how many soever he bring up, he will always feel that there are more to follow ; he may range the trackless realms of fancy, and, catching the "shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses," he may deliver them to the world as "forms more real than living man ;" but how many soever he may catch, he will always see unnumbered and superior forms beyond : good may begin, better may succeed, but best will ever remain behind. He may stand forever "singing hymns unbidden" to the world, but he will never utter all the notes that "vibrate in the memory ;" he may "ever let the fancy *roam*," knowing that "pleasure never is at home," but he will never exhaust his bountiful beau-ideal ; he may labour from spring-time to harvest, and from harvest to spring, but he will never entirely glean his "teeming brain." The source of his inspiration lies beyond the reach of language, beyond the morning stars ; it is commensurate with time and space. "It subsists only in the mind ; the sight never beheld it, nor has the hand expressed it ; it is an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is

always labouring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting.”¹

I have dwelt thus at length on poetry because of the wideness of its grasp, embracing as it does almost every species of beauty, and assaying to discover and celebrate almost everything that is admirable in nature or in art. A special examination of the suggestiveness of architectural beauty would not be thrown away; the following considerations, however, must suffice.

Architectural ornament consists in an imitation of nature. The key to architectural beauty, therefore, must be sought for in the pleasurable suggestiveness of such imitations, and its value in their success. Large buildings, such as churches and cathedrals, on which ornament is bountifully lavished, are very suggestive. They suggest nature in her fairest and most pleasant forms. A set of massive columns, for example, may suggest woods and groves, the trunks of trees—ancient oak, and beech, and elm, and pine—staunch and stately, deeply rooted in the earth, and clad in honourable bark. The lofty arches with their mouldings may suggest branches reaching across the walks and meeting each other overhead—generous, serviceable boughs, protecting from the sun and rain. The mullioned and transomed windows may suggest openings skyward, which admit the light by measure and restrain the glare by twigs and foliage. This whole idea is seconded and the effect enhanced by the addition of tracery and sculpturing in some of the many forms to be hereafter mentioned. Some decorations (cable mouldings, for example) are, it might be objected, not copies of nature, but of art. There is no necessity to think so; cables themselves are copied from nature—from the honeysuckle, the convolvulus, or the ivy, “the sweetbriar or the vine or the twisted eglantine.”

If the objects already examined are thus suggestive, and

¹ Sir Joshua Reynolds.

if poetry can find nothing admirable in any object except through its suggestiveness, it would seem unnecessary to devote special attention to other objects of avowed beauty—to birds, fishes, shells, insects, jewellery, &c.—with a view of proving that they also are beautiful only by their suggestiveness. The latent suggestions begotten by these and many other classes that might be named are perhaps more, perhaps less numerous, perhaps of a lower, perhaps of a higher order, than those we have investigated; but they are all, I apprehend, in keeping with the suggestive principles of the flowers, plants, and sunsets already examined.

It may, however, be necessary to point out how the grace of *motion* is also dependent on suggestiveness. A beautiful motion is that which suggests some other motion of a grateful or pleasant sensation. There is indeed no motion which is attended with strong sensations; nevertheless such feelings as certain movements are attended with are suggested by similar movements, and these suggestions cause certain movements to be regarded as graceful and others as ungraceful. The movements which constitute swimming, diving, dancing, skating, riding, rowing, leaping, vaulting, sliding, swinging, sailing, floating, bending—as of corn; revolving—as of windmill sails; flowing—as of rivers; waving—as of trees; flying—as of birds; streaming—as of flags, &c., are graceful motions, and may all suggest one another. That this is really the case may be gathered from the hints contained in the passages of poetry already quoted to illustrate beauty in general, or from any poem wherein the phenomenon is dealt with. Falling, slipping, rushing, thrusting, chopping, tearing, filing, planing, hammering, breaking, scraping, sawing, shooting, boxing, fighting, struggling, wrestling, shuffling, kicking, stamping, hopping, pickaxeing, limping, dragging, beating, &c., are all more or less attended with unpleasant sensations or disagreeable feelings; they also may suggest each other, and are therefore

ugly or ungraceful. Shapes, in like manner, are accompanied by pleasant or unpleasant sensations to the eye or to other parts of the body: certain shapes suggest like shapes, and are therefore comely; certain other shapes suggest like shapes, and are therefore uncomely.

Lastly, may not some light be thrown upon this part of our subject by comparing the *names* bestowed upon members of the various classes of objects in nature? Let us reason from hypothesis to fact. Articles which form the necessities or requisites of life, and whose value is quickly discovered, would, in the progress of knowledge, be sure to be seized upon, named, and utilised by men without delay; and the names given to them would be arbitrary, or such as were suggested by some very obvious quality in the articles themselves. Objects, on the other hand, which are in no respect requisite or necessary to the enjoyment of existence, but are, in fact, sources of pastime or amusement, would be long looked at and admired by uncouth or primitive peoples, but would be left without names until communities were tolerably well off as regarded the necessities of life and at leisure to concern themselves about such matters. In the progress of civilisation, however, these things would at length be attended to, but gradually and fragmentarily; one by one birds and butterflies, moths and insects, flowers, plants, ferns, and grasses would be admired, examined, christened, and finally tended and valued; and the names chosen would be such as were suggested by some peculiarity in the objects themselves. After this leisurely interval, when the fulness of time was come for any of these ornamental species, such associations as had at first suggested themselves to the spectator would have grown dull and common, and other analogies more latent and removed—the germ of genuine poetry—would be recognised, would develop into intelligible conceptions, would receive a verbal clothing, and become the appellations of the objects in question. And do we not find that this is the process

which, in its results at least, has, in fact, taken place? When we compare the names given to eatables—meats, vegetables, and fruits—with those given to birds, flowers, and insects, we find that a large proportion of the former are simple terms whose origin seems, from the few that can be traced, to be taken from some palpable feature in the object; while a large proportion of the latter are compound appellations founded on analogies, sometimes far-fetched and surprising, and often poetical.

We shall take a few examples of this truth from the two classes of objects named, viz., the necessities and the superfluities of existence. The utility of beef, mutton, oxen, sheep, bacon, pig, veal, bread, butter, tea, crust, crumb, water, apples, pears, will be denied by few. Now the etymological origin of all these words is involved in the obscurest antiquity.¹ Some dictionaries fetch us back to the Sanscrit and Hebrew, and fine away the syllables until there is but a single letter left; which shows at least at what a very early period these things had been made objects of attention and received names. Many of the terms in question have blood-relations in half the languages of Europe, and affiliated connections in the other half; and, from what we know of their primary significations, they seem to be of a very simple and unsophisticated description. Most of the significations, however, are entirely beyond our reach: *tea* may be derived from *cha*, the Chinese for the leaf of the tea-tree, but why the leaf was called *cha* it would probably puzzle the Chinese themselves to say. There can be little doubt, however, that if the primary meaning of all the above-named articles was discovered, it would be found to be based on some very obvious idea suggested by the object itself. This view is attested by the account given of several kindred words, whose meanings have been traced, more or less successfully, to their inception. *Wheat*, for instance,

¹ For the derivation of most of the following words see Wedgewood's "Dictionary of English Etymology."

seems to have been so called from a word meaning *white*; *cabbage* is thought to come from the Latin for a *head* (*caput*); *horse* is so called from a word meaning to *neigh*, and *cow* from a word meaning to *bellow*; *cake* is so called because it is a *mass*, and *loaf* because it is a *lump* or *body*; *hay* is so called because of its connection with *grass*; *hen* is taken from a word signifying a *cock* (cf. *hahn*, the German for cock); *egg* and *eye* seem to have a common parentage; *grass* comes from a word meaning to *grow*; *meal* from a word meaning to *grind*; *oats* from a word meaning *eatables*; *barley* and *bread* are twin offspring; *milk* comes from a word meaning to *stroke* or *squeeze*; *biscuit* is so called because it is *twice baked*; *cod* is constructed from a term meaning *stuffed* or *bulging*; and so with other words. These derivations are sufficiently primitive and unpoetical.

As we get farther from the necessities of life, we find that the names become less obvious and more poetical. Mark the derivation of *mackerel* from a word meaning a *bruise* or *stain* in fruit. When we come to birds, we find a great many compound names built up in order that the suggestions produced by the object in the beholder's mind should be worthily sustained and represented. A graduated table might be drawn up on this principle dealing with all classes of objects in nature; and, were this the place for such a task, it might be shown that, as a general, but, of course, not invariable rule, we have given to objects names becoming more and more complex or poetical as we reach those species which are comparatively of minor value and of comparatively recent systematisation. It must, however, here suffice to mention a few examples from the lighter classes of articles before specified, with a view of showing that, on the whole, the rule holds good in a remarkable degree. We shall, therefore, draw upon British birds, butterflies, moths, ferns, and grasses.

And first of birds. Let the *lapwing*, *sandpiper*, *redshank*,

razorbill, spoonbill, shoveller, wryneck, swift, yellow-hammer, redpole, gold-crest, fire-crest, pintail, turnstone, wheatear, chatterer, stonechat, whinchat, blackcap, wagtail, butcher-bird, kingfisher and *oyster-catcher* serve our turn. The poetry of these appellations is doubtless rather commonplace, most of the suggestions being simple or superficial; nevertheless there is a distinct advance from the victual list. Be it noticed, moreover, that some of the commonest birds are omitted from the above catalogue, because, being abundant and familiar, they were no doubt christened at a very early period, and the philology of many of their names is now as much a matter of speculation as that of the meats and animals before mentioned. Others are traceable to several linguistic generations, and of these may be instanced rook, robin, grouse, partridge, sparrow, gull, wren, pigeon, lark, hawk, and thrush.

When we reach insects, plants, and flowers, we have arrived at a department of objects still farther removed from the necessities of life, and which, therefore, we ought to find invested with names more fanciful or poetical than those of any class yet specified. Let the following illustrations speak for themselves. Among butterflies we have the following names:—*Red admiral, tortoiseshell, painted lady, swallowtail, peacock, marbled white, brimstone, purple emperor, white admiral, orange-tipped, grizzled skipper, comma, silver-studded blue, silver-washed fritillary, pearl-bordered fritillary, clouded yellow, purple hair-streak,* and others.

Among moths we have the following appellations, more plentiful and various than the foregoing, as are also the insects themselves:—*Death's head, latticed heath, lobster, chimney-sweeper, black rustic, scorched carpet, sloe carpet, maiden's blush, vapourer, marbled coronet, royal mantle, seraphin, leopard, tiger, ghost-swift, festoon, muslin, satin wave, smoky wave, fan-footed wave, lunar marbled, figure of eight, eyed-hawk, elephant-hawk, fiery clearwing, feathered ranunculus, feathered thorn, marbled clover, spotted sulphur,*

burnished brass, old lady, mouse, Brussels lace, peppered, lace border, flame brocade, brindled pug, dotted footman, black arches, angle shades. Moths are chiefly to be observed and obtained by night; there is therefore much difficulty attending their study and examination; and accordingly it is not at all surprising that this tribe should for a long time have attracted but little attention, and been left without names. During this leisurely interval men would have plenty of leisure to reflect on such specimens as were brought to light, so that by the time entomology was sufficiently matured to be styled a study or a science, poetry would be more advanced, the more trite appellations would have been rejected, quainter suggestions would have been liberated, curious resemblances detected, and a poetical vocabulary of prænomens built up.

Among flowers and plants let the following names be registered:—*Foxglove, heartsease, cardinal flower, red-hot poker, love-lies-bleeding, maid-in-a-mist, larkspur, Jacob's ladder, Job's tears, Aaron's rod, Adam's needle, Solomon's seal, witch's thimble, golden rod, cowslip, buttercup, crow-foot, dog's tooth violet, eyebright, speedwell, colt's foot, dent-de-lion, monk's hood, lady's slipper, lady's smock, Venus' fly-catcher, Venus' looking-glass, scullcap, cockscomb, turncap lily, tiger lily, prince's feather, snowdrop, daisy (day's eye), asters (stars), golden feather, silver weed.* Among ferns and grasses may be mentioned:—*Adder's tongue, hart's tongue, maidenhair, lady fern, horsetail, wolf's foot, hare's foot, stag's horn, basket and shield ferns, and foxtail, feather, mare's tail, tufted hair, ribbon, spear, quaking, and mouse-ear grasses.* Some of the commonest flowers, however, are named after the botanists who discovered or introduced them; their advent into the science being late, a name was required immediately, and, as in the case of comets and planets, this name had to be devised by unpoetical men of science, who got out of the difficulty accordingly by calling the object after themselves or each other: the lobelia, dahlia, fuschia, begonia, camellia, and gloxinia

are instances of this. So likewise some of the commonest flowers have old and unpoetical names; the *rose*, for example, so called because it is *red*; the *lily*, because it is *white*; and *myrtle*, because it has a *perfume*. Many other botanical appellations have their poetry obscured by the language, Latin and Greek, &c., in which they are couched. Thus *calceolaria* is so called because the blossom is like a *slipper* (*L. calceolus*); *cineraria* because of the substance like *ashes* that comes on the leaves (*L. cineres*); *gladiolus* because it is shaped like a *sword* (*L. gladius*); *nasturtium* because the odour *torments* the *nose* (*L. nasus tortus*); *geranium* on account of the beak-like prongs that appear after the blossom has fallen off (γέρανός, *a crane*); *pelargonium* for a similar reason (πελαργός, *a stork*); *hydrangea* because of the capsules being like *water vessels* (ὕδωρ, *water*, ἀγγεῖον, *vessel*); *chrysanthemum* because of its *golden bloom* (χρῦσός, *gold*, ἄνθος, *a flower*); *heliotrope* because its stem *turns* towards the *sun* (ἥλιος, *the sun*, τρέπω, *to turn*); *mimulus* because its flower is like an ape that *mimics* (μῖμος, *a mimic*).

CHAPTER IV.

III. BEAUTY ATTACHES ONLY TO UTILITY.

1. *Objective Utility.*

THE next proposed law of beauty is that it exists only as it coexists with utility, a proposition, perhaps, which will not be so readily granted as the previous ones. Let us, however, bring the matter to the test. Utility is two-sided, and may be objective or subjective according as its mental or material side is looked at: the former relates to material *objects*, the latter to mental *faculties*. Generally speaking, objective utility may be said to consist in things, and subjective utility in knowledge; we shall treat of the former first, reserving the latter for another chapter. This division, however, is only adopted for convenience, and will only be adhered to in a general way.

Useful things may be divided into two great categories: first, those which enable us to avoid pain; and secondly, those which enable us to secure pleasure. Among useful objects belonging to the first class we find most of the necessities of life, *e.g.*, wearing apparel, together with its accessories—boots, hats, umbrellas, soap, &c.; foods, such as bread, meat, vegetables, water, milk, &c.; furniture, such as chairs, tables, beds, &c.; buildings, such as houses, offices, shops, warehouses, bridges; also streets, roads, paths, ships, wharfs, coal, candles, and other miscellaneous articles, which, in fact, may be termed generally the indispensables of civilised life. Some of these articles may not, of course, be absolutely necessary to existence, but

they are all in some measure essential to society in refined communities, and their utility consists in enabling us to avoid pain or to procure pleasure. Many a man's life largely depends upon the produce brought in ships from far-off countries, although he knows hardly anything about marine commerce, and perhaps has never seen a ship in his life. Let ships be done away with, however, and mark what follows. The vegetables, or corn, or coals imported come to an end; other markets must be frequented; higher prices must be paid, and more anxiety and expense incurred. Failing other markets, new ground must be broken up and tilled and sown, trees must be cut down, or timber or turf must be bought and burned; and, altogether, other occupations must be neglected, harder work must be done, and, in most cases, less food must be consumed and more privations suffered. Thus ships must be classed among those articles which, at least, enable us to avoid pain. From these remarks it may be easy to understand how buildings, clothes, furniture, and the other objects named come under the same category. Houses protect us against the inclemency of the weather, against the scorching heat of the sun, the bad effects of the rain, of frost and snow and wind, which otherwise would bring on ague, colds, rheumatism, neuralgia, fever, and death. Law courts, business offices, &c., protect others from the like mischiefs while engaged in discharging their duties and making arrangements which are essential to the well-being of the nation.

The second class of useful articles—those which enable us to procure pleasure—consist of such things as follows:—Scents, sweetmeats, spices, condiments, delicate things to eat and drink, and soft and comfortable things to wear and sit upon, attractive things to look at, carpets, cushions, sofas, curtains, pictures, flowers, plants, musical instruments, song-birds, carriages, yachts, jewellery, ribbons, gloves, pets—in short, those things that are known as the luxuries of life, the superfluous comforts of existence. No

man would die or suffer bodily pain were he to be deprived of his diamond rings, his pickles, his portraits, his worked slippers, or his strawberries and cream ; nor would a lady find life become unpleasant on being denied her gloves, her ribbons, her cushions, her rugs, her smelling-bottle, or her canaries. Such things as these increase the sensible pleasures of existence, and though by long use they come to be regarded by some as indispensable, and are, in fact, in some cases artificial necessities, yet their loss implies neither labour nor pain, and would soon cease to be felt by a cheerful or contented mind.

Useless articles are such as do not serve us directly or indirectly in either of the above ways ; and to prove that beauty does not attach to them, but is confined to utility, will be a somewhat negative task, and capable only of negative evidence. If something were asserted to be beautiful and yet admitted to be useless, there would be a definite point on which to make an attack ; but if everything which is acknowledged to be beautiful can be shown to be useful, we are still outside the precincts of positive proof ; and even negative evidence is not exhausted until every object of beauty has been dealt with and its utility established. We must, therefore, proceed hypothetically, nor need we at all regret being obliged to do so, for our hypothetical postulates will be found as satisfactory and conclusive as our empirical premises.

If there were such a thing in external nature as real immutable beauty, it stands to reason that we might have objects totally divested of utility and yet commanding our admiration. Nay, more, we would accumulate such objects in the interests of art, and receive the applause of our fellow-men for so doing. Are there any such objects ? Are there any such accumulations ? And what and where are they ? I know of none such, but I shall try the experiment in the interests of science. I shall get an ornament constructed for my drawing-room table which shall be a *mere* ornament and nothing more ; it shall not

represent a bird, or a nest, or an egg, or a flower, or a fruit, or a shell, or a fish, or a dog, or a cat; for that would involve a lesson, however meagre, in natural history. It shall not represent a man, or a woman, or a child, or an occupation, or an incident, episode, phase, or condition of life, for that would involve a lesson, however poor, in moral philosophy. It shall not represent anything; yet in shape it shall combine the spherical with the cylindrical and the undulating; it shall have the "line of beauty;" it shall be perfectly smooth; and it shall have the best and purest colours, harmoniously arranged. Having placed this object on my table, I shall call in a neighbour and ask him to admire it. "What is it?" he asks. "It is an ornament," I reply. "Well, but what is it *for*?" he continues. "It is for nothing but ornament; is it not a beautiful thing?" I answer. "Nay," persists my neighbour, "I cannot tell you whether it is beautiful or not until I know what purpose it will serve. What is your motive in putting it on your table?" "I have no other motive than that of attracting attention and awakening admiration, and the thing can serve no other purpose; it is simply a beautiful object, meant to be looked at and admired, nothing more," I answer. "Well," rejoins my friend, "in that case I cannot say I admire your taste. Your thing is undoubtedly round, and smooth, and curved, and of very fine and brilliant hues; but if it is utterly without use, I really cannot help thinking that it is utterly without beauty. It seems to me a very extraordinary ornament, and, in fact, a ridiculous-looking object. Pray what might it be made of?" "It is made of box-wood and ivory, carefully carved and exquisitely stained and polished, and see how gracefully it rotates." "Take my advice," responds my neighbour, "and have it removed. Cut it up and make pegtops or chessmen of it; it is only in the way on your table. You will get no one to admire it, and every one you show it to will laugh at it." Now this episode, we may be verily assured, is

what, under the circumstances indicated, would really happen; for it necessarily follows from the fact that colour, shape, and motion, though they cause pleasant sensations in the mind, are never in themselves objects of admiration, nor can they be admired when co-existent unless they be found to inhere in something possessing a greater amount of utility than the mere optic sensations are capable of constituting. The mere pleasure of such sensations undoubtedly constitutes utility of a certain value, but owing to the microscopic intensity of such pleasure, the great difficulty of making it out and distinguishing it satisfactorily from all considerations of the nature and end of the object in which it is found, and the liability of such pleasure to be swallowed up by the emotions generated by reflection on the ulterior value of the object itself, these pleasurable sensations are insufficient, without the assistance of some more tangible utility, to redeem the object from contempt.

Flowers will afford an appropriate illustration of the foregoing remarks. For what is the utility of flowers? Is it anything more than colour, shape, and motion? Assuredly it is. Their utility is made up of a structural organism and a physiological system containing a mine of wonderful instruction and constituting a science in itself. The lessons to be derived from the structure and physiology of plants are varied and innumerable; they elevate the mind to the contemplation of that "one stupendous whole whose body nature is and God the soul," and of which flowers are little representative fragments; they are equal to the acquisition of a language; they are worth the society of men whose acquaintance is said to be a liberal education. Add to this the delicious fragrance which so many garden flowers exhale, and which constitutes a very tangible utility; where this is wanting, however, observe the excellent richness, variety, and purity of colour which the majority of garden flowers display—hues with which no artistic imitations can for

a moment compare. There is nothing in pictures or in ornaments to equal the colours of the commonest garden flowers; they baffle all reproduction and beggar all description; they are incomparably fine and perfect beyond anything that human effort can achieve. All the artists in the world could not produce anything equal to the petal of a geranium, and the very best approaches to nature which canvas or paper can exhibit are inevitably dimmed and spoiled by time. Flowers themselves only retain their brilliant hues while alive and healthy; so long, therefore, only is our admiration accorded, for dead or withered flowers are ugly and contemptible. Certain gems owe half their value or utility to that quality which neither flowers possess nor painters can bestow—the quality of perpetual freshness. Flowers secrete nectar; they also possess a sanitary advantage connected with the absorption of carbonic acid gas from the air. Putting all these items together, they constitute a very small yet decided aggregate of utility; and flowers notwithstanding, it will be admitted on all hands, serve to sustain a very large amount of beauty—a coincidence perfectly consistent with the rules we are testing, as the sequel will show.

Certain objects made by deceptive associations to appear beautiful are much admired until the deception is discovered, when their beauty vanishes and they no longer solicit our admiration. Artificial flowers and fruit are instances of this. We cannot, for a time perhaps, help admiring a window full of those articles, because we cannot, for a time, help being deceived by the excellence of their colouring and the fidelity of their resemblance to nature, though we should never admire them as much as a person who took them to be real flowers and fruit. Passing the shop every day, however, the fact gradually comes home to us; we inevitably realise that the things are only imitations, and in the same degree do they cease to evoke our admiration. A bouquet of artificial flowers under a glass case, on our mantelpiece or elsewhere, may

be long endured for its quondam power of decoying into an agreeable emotion ; but after this power is quite worn out, taken away by an appreciation of the cheat, neither the ingenuity of the artist nor the excellence of the colouring can atone for the loss. The object becomes little better than an eyesore, a mockery, and a snare ; we contemplate it with positive repugnance, as displaying a disposition without the ability to deceive, and as reminding us of our own former ignorance and simplicity. The smallest apology for utility, however, will suffice to avert this repugnance. Place one of these artificial flowers in a lady's bonnet, and see what a change ensues. The utility or use the flower is now made to yield is indeed extremely small—perhaps only enough for an apology ; yet, compared with its former duties, it is palpable, genuine, and redeeming ; for a bonnet is a covering for the head and worn for protection from the weather, and this protection is not a thing that can be weighed or measured.

Many proofs of this law might be obtained from the art of architecture, whose details constitute a fertile field for speculation. Architecture boasts of embracing a large and important department of artificial beauty ; yet I venture to premise that in all its ways and operations it acknowledges the force of the law in question, and can present us with no beauty apart from utility. Were there such a thing as beauty independent of utility, Corinthian columns and capitals would be beautiful not merely in their accustomed places supporting an entablature, but in places where they could serve no purpose whatever—at the corners of streets, in markets, in vacant spaces, in parks, and squares, and gardens, in the middle of lawns, or by the sea-shore, &c. But who ever erects them in such places ? or who, if they were so erected, would not call them preposterous and absurd ? And why so ? Because it would be an attempt to cultivate abstract beauty, to create admiration without utility, which is impossible. If the most skilful sculpturing can be admired irrespective

of any useful purpose, why do we not fill our cathedrals and churches with stands or vases solely for the purpose of sustaining beauty—of being exquisitely chiselled with tracery and flower-work in all manner of patterns and designs? Would they not enhance the artistic value of the place, and, by being totally unconnected with utility, present us with the purest and most unalloyed kind of beauty? The only answer to such a question, is that apart from utility the most exquisite sculpturing could not elicit our admiration. Even the details must be based on utility; for example:—

Windows are useful; mullions and dripstones are well; but dripstones must be over a window, an arch, or a door, or something that seems to require a “hood.” Place a hood moulding in the middle of a plain wall, and it will become grotesque. The like with regard to mullions; they must divide the face of a window, mitigate the glare, and support the superstructure, or seem to do so. To do the second they ought to be opaque, and to do the third they ought to be perpendicular. Artistically arranged, they suggest trees, with their branches above opening into “arched walks of twilight groves,” and become very beautiful. Crockets, finials, and bosses are also very well, but they too must have their serviceable associations, and confine themselves to such. A boss must seem to tie the ribs of a groined roof, as it were, in a knot; crockets must sprout like buds or fruit on the branch of an arch or the angles of a pinnacle; a finial must grow like a shoot or tuft from the end or apex of some architectural twig or stem which does work—must be a feature of generosity on the “enough and to spare” principle. None of these ornaments can be scattered about a building capriciously or at random, for it is by their position more than by their form that they serve to impress us with a notion of utility. Sculptured capitals, especially Corinthian ones, are much admired, and well they may be; for do they not remind us of trees and forests, with the foliage above us and the

trunks around us—rural paths, shady spots, cool retreats, “places that pale passion loves”—while, with the sun declining and the birds retiring, and “all the air a solemn stillness” holding, we are transferred to times and scenes far off and fresh and lovely—scenes which have furnished poets with music and sentiments since ever they began to sing the great anthem of nature to the race of man? But once sever those ornamental objects from their business, post them up the aisle, and let them stand there supporting nothing, and they would very soon become insufferable. Buttresses are often beautiful features, but they are also useful ones. Take away their utility, place them at random outside a building merely for the sake of ornament, and they will become impertinent and contemptible. To those who never heard of “oblique pressure” or a “lateral thrust” they must indeed appear idle objects in any position, if such persons are capable of reflecting on the matter.

But, again, not only must architectural ornament attach to utility or grow out of something serviceable, as above described, the departmental disposition and order in which decoration is arranged and the amount of the same must obey similar laws of utility. We may cover a building, walls and pillars, without and within, with sculptured flowering, and make the place suggest a perfect bower, with ivy-covered lattice and thickets of woodbine and eglantine, and the effect, as many suburban cottages attest, may be enchanting. But then we must be impartial; we cannot have a wall half sculptured with flowering here and one wholly sculptured there, and a patch beyond, without anything to account for the disparity or explain its meaning, which is its use. Patches would never suggest a bower or a wood; they might suggest shrubs and verdure, but even to do this their disposition must in some respects conform itself to that observed by shrubs and verdure. A chancel or a choir that had one of its sides richly ornamented and the other side plain would

certainly evoke disapprobation; if every second pillar on one side of the nave were beautifully chiselled and every third pillar on the other side, the arrangement would assuredly call forth condemnation; if the pulpit, a couple of columns, or a window were lavishly adorned and the rest of the cathedral left unadorned, emotions of hostility would rise up as before. And wherefore the reason of all this? It is not because uniformity has any advantage over variety as an element of suggestiveness, for an unaccountable diversity may be more welcome than a slavish symmetry. It is because, in such cases as those just specified, one part of the building would suggest a forest or a shrubbery and another part would repudiate the suggestion; because one portion of the structure would make an assertion which the remaining portion contradicted; this feature would make a move which that feature failed to second. Hence we could not have any unanimous associations, whether recognised or latent; our suggestions would all be at variance and at strife; we should not know what to think, consequently we should be perplexed, bewildered, and unhappy; and since admiration depends upon a successful operation of the intellect, it is easy to see how none could be experienced.

Or, again, the floor of a building may be decorated, but if so, the decoration must resemble something level. It must suggest a carpet, or a beach, or a grating, or a lawn, a flower-strewn path, rush-covered ground—in short, something *fit to walk upon*. Provided this be the case, then the better the imitation the more it will be admired. But let the floor's decoration—the light and dark shading, the figures, or signs—represent steps, or ladders, fissures, mounds, spikes, rough stones, deep recesses, perpendicular projections—anything, in fact, *not fit to walk upon*, and its beauty is at an end, or is rather non-existent; we despise the whole performance and condemn the folly of the artist. Certain comely jugs are meant, when empty, to stand upside down; a foolish artist, to improve upon

their beauty, makes the handles project above the mouth ; they can no longer stand upside down. We denounce the alteration ; the utility has been impaired, and the vessels are consequently less comely. Certain farmhouse vessels, which are meant to stand upon the floor, have their handles at the side of a wide mouth ; the next generation has these jugs with their handles crossed over the mouth to prevent the domestic animals from thrusting their heads into them. No one objects to the alteration ; every one, in fact, approves it ; the vessels have been made more comely ; the change has removed a positive source of mischief.

Let us now enter an inferior department of beauty. Ornamentation is in many houses carried to the verge of inutility ; and whenever it fully reaches this limit, beauty, and with it admiration, disappears. Artificial flowers may be called beautiful or not, according as the spectator is deceived or not—according as he finds his thoughts carried off to the originals, with their colour, perfume, organism, and development, or finds them baulked in their journey and thrown back upon the trap before his eyes. Precisely the same rule obtains in dramatic representations and the emotions they are intended to excite. Some persons can never overlook the unreality of such performances, and they consequently are scarcely affected at all by what they see ; others, on the contrary, readily forget themselves, and are by consequence easily and largely worked into various emotions. I said before that the slightest apology for utility will serve to let the ornament pass muster, and it will almost always be found that this apology is present even in the jimcracks of the mantelpiece and the *bric-à-bracs* of the cabinet. These ornaments may be divided into two classes—(1.) those which are inherently useful, and (2.) those which have a lesson to teach or a moral to point, however trivial or curtailed the import. To the first class belong such things as fans, flower-holders, jardiniers, paper-holders, card-holders, match-holders, photo-stands, watchstands, ink-

stands, mugs, bowls, cups, saucers, plates, pipes, caskets, scent-bottles, snuffboxes, &c. These are all intrinsically serviceable, and if not in actual use, they are surplusage utility, and a security for what is in use. To the second class belong miniatures, representations of men, women, children, dogs, deer, goats, birds, and other animals, butterflies, beetles, and other insects, fishes, reptiles, ships, boats, fruit, houses, obelisks, temples, idols, and other models, curious relics, or mementoes, such as pebbles, coins, bits of metal, ore, stone, marble, clay, porcelain, china, wood, and a thousand such commodities. Now, these articles may read a lesson in biology, zoology, geology, mineralogy, sociology, or in some other branch of science or speculation; or, if well executed, they may, like a good picture, tell a story, and indicate, first, design, and, secondly, the power of fulfilling that design. Some of these articles—those, for instance, whose value depends upon the fidelity of their resemblance to something else, and whose workmanship is bad—are devoid of utility and consequently of beauty. A few persons, gifted with a lively fancy but destitute of discrimination, may, no doubt, be decoyed now and again into an emotion of admiration at the suggestion, but to the majority of educated persons such things of inutility are a contempt for ever. There is an erection in London called the “Marble Arch,” of which every comer from the country exclaims, “How very beautiful!” to which every dweller in the metropolis replies, “I cannot see it. What use is the building? It stands there for dumb show, serviceable neither as a gate nor as a barrier; it does no work and answers no purpose, unless it be for a landmark to omnibuses. I think it is a very meaningless structure, and I see nothing to admire in it.” Make it do some work, however—place it before a palace, make it an entrance to a court or a garden—and it will at once appear in another light, regenerated and redeemed.

Again, if beauty be not confined to utility, why do we

always take care to adorn whatever we do adorn with representations of things having in themselves a palpable element of utility, and avoid all representation of whatever is utterly useless? Why is it that our ceilings, our carpets, our curtains, our mirror-frames, our cabinets, our porches, bridges, churches, cathedrals, &c., &c., are covered with representations of buds, and flowers, and verdure, and plants, and birds, and insects—things confessedly useful in a certain degree—and not with representations of thistles, nettles, brambles, eggshells, corks, fruit-stones, broken bottles, worn-out boots and hats, rotten leaves, withered flowers, dead plants, bits of paper, old iron, or other things confessedly worthless or contemptible? The only answer is, that beauty cannot exist apart from utility. Indeed, it is the futile shifts and struggles that have been made to reach beauty pure and simple, those affected efforts to evoke admiration by something totally disconnected with utility, which have led many to question or deny the phenomenon of beauty altogether. Beauty and utility can only exist as they co-exist. Once, therefore, let utility cease, and beauty ceases too; once let beauty be pushed forward till it outstrips utility, and it will inevitably collapse and turn contemptible. The experiment has often been tried unwittingly, and though at first it may succeed with a simple soul, a little time or a little education will quickly dispel such admiration, and the performance will be pronounced a wasteful and ridiculous success—bad as “to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to throw a perfume on the violet, to smooth the ice, or add another hue unto the rainbow.”

The same line of argument may be applied to shape. A serpentine line is beautiful when its utility is obvious, otherwise it is either indifferent or absurd. The curvature in the human spinal column is beautiful because it prevents the head and shoulders from jolting on the lower vertebræ, and so causing pain when we walk or run or jump; but a serpentine pillar supporting a porch, where neither motion nor feeling is involved and no purpose

served, would be manifestly preposterous. The vibrations made by sound are very admirable when registered on smoked glass, because they teach us how sound does its work, but if we were to write our letters in wavy lines and strokes the effect would be ludicrous. A road passing through a hilly country or an interesting locality may wind about and turn and double with much advantage, if by so doing it avoid a river, or a precipice, or a rock, or a mountain, or if it yield us a glimpse of the landscape or a view of a castle which would otherwise have been missed; such reasons account with eloquence for the digression, and make the crookedness seem beautiful. On a flat plain or level moorland, across a desert or sandy tract, where nothing could be gained by angles or divergence, the road must be straight, any winding, twisting, or meandering, however conformable to the "line of beauty," however mathematically proportioned, would in such a case be both ugly and pernicious. A spiral form is very pretty in a creeper, a corkscrew, or a spring, because there its utility is palpable; in a crutch, a candle, or a fishing-rod it would be hideous, because there its inutility would be palpable. So a bell-handle, a door-handle, a billiard-ball, piano-notes, may be beautiful if smooth; a sword-handle, a moss-rose, a peach-stone, on the other hand, to be beautiful must be rough. Mats and brushes that were as smooth as tables and mirrors would be as unbearable as tables and mirrors that were as rough as mats and brushes. The beauty of a silk pocket-handkerchief is enhanced by its fineness and smoothness, the beauty of a bathing-towel by its roughness and coarseness. A basket may be admired though it may be full of holes and unevenness, qualities which would render an umbrella, a sail, or a target contemptible. The outer or upper side of leaves which hang down, to be beautiful ought to be smoother than the under side, which may be beautiful though rough; for the upper side receives the rain and should allow it to run off and not remain to

rot the foliage. A mantelpiece or a desk may look well if smooth and even, a slanting pavement may be comely if rough and rasping. Utility is in all such cases the arbiter of beauty and of admiration. Thousands of examples might be given, but it must suffice to adduce the foregoing as illustrations of a principle which will be found to be universal.

Now it must not be concluded that if the principle were violated in the above examples—if, for instance, roughness and smoothness should improperly change places, the various articles would become ugly in the one case *because* they were rough, and in the other case because they were smooth; for roughness and smoothness are sensations merely, and cannot by themselves be ugly or beautiful. Roughness, as we have seen, has in some things as much to do with admiration as smoothness has in other things. The real reason why a violation of the rule would induce disgust is that we should by such a violation sacrifice utility to beauty without making the beauty a whit greater. This being the case, we are grieved at the folly which diminishes what is tangibly valuable without enhancing what is ideally admirable. If mere smoothness were beautiful in one thing it would be beautiful in all things, and equally potent to call forth our admiration. A looking-glass is smooth and beautiful, smoothness being an element of its utility; a door-mat is rough and may be beautiful, its roughness being an element of its utility: make the mat as smooth as the mirror, and you make it so much the uglier. In those things, on the other hand, which owe nothing to the nature of their surface, it is a matter of indifference whether they are smooth or rough: a hat, an overcoat, a ceiling, a watch-face, the bark of a tree, the cover of a book, may be equally beautiful whether rough or smooth. We are fonder, however, of a smooth surface than a rough one, because the sensation it causes is more pleasant, so that where utility is equally balanced we generally adopt the smooth. So much for shape and figure.

The same line of argument may be applied to motion, and a few illustrations will suffice to show that here also a sacrifice of utility involves a sacrifice of beauty, and consequently of admiration. If waving, curving, serpentine motions were beautiful in themselves, they would exact our admiration wherever they occurred. That such motions are sometimes the occasion of admiration is indisputable, but it will be found that in all cases where they are they assist utility; and if any utility be sacrificed to secure such motions, our admiration ceases and our contempt begins.

The motions of the human body, for example, are almost all circular or waving; every limb moves in a circle whose centre is the articulation, and whose radius is the length of the limb. The arms oscillate and the legs swing in circles or segments of circles. The eyes and the head are spherical, and revolve ball-and-socket-wise. The jaw moves up and down like the lid of a box or the leaf of a table. We cannot even draw a straight line without describing part of a circle, either with the fingers, the forearm, the upper arm, or else with the legs or some other portion of the body; even when we shoot out our tongue, the root or back portion moves circularly. We walk in waves, and if we try to do otherwise we shuffle and make ourselves ridiculous. If a pencil were so affixed to the head that its point projected out sideways over one shoulder so as to touch a wall or screen, this pencil, if we were to walk along parallel to the wall, would register our movements by a wavy or undulating line. Now this line, call it the "line of beauty," or the "line of grace," or what you will, is undoubtedly the line of utility. When we stand upon the ground with both our feet together, we are at our greatest natural height; if we separate our legs, either laterally or longitudinally, we bring ourselves down below our full height; and in closing our legs again we regain our height. Now this is precisely what takes place in walking. When one leg is projected in front and both feet touch the ground, heel and toe, we are at the

nadir of our curving line. In advancing to project the other leg, we must first bring it up to the front one, and when, in passing, the two are parallel, we are at the zenith of the arch; and as we continue the projection we begin to descend again, and so on. This movement is graceful and its advantage is evident. If, however, we were to compel vehicles, carts, trains, tramways, to imitate such motion, and for that purpose were to construct the roads and lay rails in an undulating manner, the effect would be as bad as could be; not that the mere motion would be graceful in the one case and the reverse in the other, but because in the first the utility would be free and complete, while in the second it would be gratuitously sacrificed. A train is intended to convey its passengers with as much rapidity and as much safety as possible to its journey's end, and if either or both of these objects be sacrificed without a valid return, the proceeding can only provoke condemnation and disgust.

Skating is a graceful movement, and in its curves and counter-curves the "line of grace" has unlimited play. When a skater wants to cross a pond, the herring-bone step is his fastest mode, and it is certainly a very comely movement; but what would be thought of the man who should transfer this movement to the street, and go along the pathway curveting about from one side to the other? By sacrificing utility to grace—in other words to nothing—he would probably be thought worthy of apartments in a lunatic asylum. Waltzing is a graceful movement, but athletes who should introduce it into the racecourse and keep turning round while running a race would not be at all admired. The serpentine movement of an eel or the bound of a kangaroo may be admired, but a hound that followed a hare by lateral undulatory movements would provoke annoyance and chastisement, or be shot as a worthless animal. The movements of a rider and of a rower may both be graceful, but they are very different from each other. There is a peculiar movement

in fencing which is much admired; it consists in giving your foil a twirl and double twirl round your adversary's weapon in order to baulk or puzzle him. Now in an arrow or a bullet shot at a target this motion could evoke no admiration, because there would be nothing gained by the evolution, while the missile would be retarded in its flight and weakened in its force. The sails of a windmill as they rotate may be admired; not so a man who should keep swinging his arms round in the same way. The motion of a carriage-wheel is graceful as the vehicle passes by, but if men were to rotate their umbrellas while holding them up they would be thought fools. The same principle may be applied to all other species of motion.

Reverting for a moment to ornament in general, there are two other cases in which pure and perfect "beauty" will be pronounced not at all beautiful. The first is where, by reason of its position, it cannot, under ordinary circumstances, be seen; and the second, where, by reason of its position, it cannot, under ordinary circumstances, be attended to. In the first case we pity the folly of the artist who so strives after effect as to continue his ornamentation after it has become invisible to the spectator; as when we see rich tracery in cathedrals and churches continued into dark passages and unfrequented recesses altogether hidden from ordinary view, or when we see it lavished in the vaults below or on the roof above. We think of the great trouble incurred and the expectations entertained, as compared with the diminutive returns realised. We further think that those expectations were foolishly entertained, and that very little sagacity was needed to foretell what would have been the result. We think further of all the admiration that might have been aroused had the work, which is now neglected and thrown away, been placed in a conspicuous position; and thinking over these things, we are grieved and cannot admire. So, likewise, we should denounce and condemn the wanton assiduity which would lead any one to make

the under side of a carpet, a table, a chair, &c., as beautiful as the upper side; or the inside of a book-cover, a vase, a jug, or a cushion, as ornamental as the outside; or the back of a picture, a mirror, or wall-paper, as gay as the front.

The second case above alluded to, in which "beauty" is not beautiful, is where, under ordinary circumstances, the mind is already so preoccupied, that it cannot attend to æsthetic phenomena, and has therefore no room for admiration. It was stated in the first chapter, when treating of the subjective element of beauty, that admiration was the result of an intellectual activity; that the emotion is a refined and delicate one; that in order to experience it the mind must be disengaged, unoccupied by a stronger feeling, and that when these conditions are refused, no beauty can be appreciated and no admiration experienced. These alternatives occur in many places, and notably in the case of markets, banks, hospitals, law courts, business offices, railway stations, and the like. Every large building admits of ornament on the exterior, or at least on any part of the exterior that can be seen from a public thoroughfare, because, holding such a position, the object assaults the attention of passers-by, and if any persons are not now at leisure to admire it, they know that many of their fellow-passengers are, and that they themselves will be so at another time. With the interior, however, where the conditions are altered, other regulations must be observed and other arrangements made. We go to a market, to a bank, to a law court, to a railway station for business purposes, and having done our business, we are anxious to be off as soon as possible. There can be no inducement to loiter in a law court admiring pilasters and reliefs and busts, much less to attend to them (were any to be seen) during the progress of a suit. The like with regard to business offices, where, even though the visitor has plenty of time on his hands, he knows he is not welcome to remain. I remember seeing a placard in one of these places which ran thus:—"Call on a man of

business during business hours, and on business only; having quickly done your business, kindly go about your business, and leave him to do his business." This is the moral and conclusion of the whole matter; this hits the nail on the head. The inmates of an hospital, again, are generally poor, uncultivated, incapable of admiring true art; and if we wish to teach them, we should at least choose some better time than when they are on a bed of sickness or suffering with minds painfully preoccupied. Students and visitors, moreover, who frequent such places, do so to attend to the patients and not to admire ornamentation. That a similar rule holds good of prisons and asylums will not be denied. With regard to railroad stations, the argument has been put so forcibly and so logically by Mr. Ruskin, that I cannot do better than transcribe a portion of the passage. "If there be any place in the world in which people are deprived of that portion of temper and discretion which are necessary to the contemplation of beauty, it is there. It is the very temple of discomfort, and the only charity that the builder can extend to us is to show as plainly as may be how soonest to escape from it. The whole system of railroad travelling is addressed to people who, being in a hurry, are therefore for the time being miserable. No one would travel in that manner who could help it—who had time to go leisurely over hills and between hedges, instead of through tunnels and between banks; at least those who would have no sense of beauty so acute as that we need consult it at the station. The railroad is in all its relations a matter of earnest business, to be got through as soon as possible. It transmutes a man from a traveller into a living parcel. For the time he has parted with the nobler characteristics of his humanity for the sake of a planetary power of locomotion. Do not ask him to admire anything. You might as well ask the wind. Carry him safely, dismiss him soon; he will thank you for nothing else. All attempts to please him in any other way are

mere mockery and insults to the things by which you endeavour to do so.”¹

If the utility of flowers be made out, it is a small matter to establish the utility of other classes of beautiful objects or graceful movements — birds, jewels, sunsets, dancing, skating, &c. Besides an organism and a physiological system far more wonderful than flowers, birds have colour, song, feathers, and flesh. The last two commodities, together with the eggs, are often remote and reserved utilities, especially in song-birds, but they unquestionably form elements in our general estimate of the species.

The utility of jewellery, and silver, gold, or precious ornaments is evident. They are the surplusage and the symbols of wealth. Should the necessity arise, they could be turned into money, exchanged, or utilised as they are. But this utility is always kept in the background. The articles are security for a contingency which may, but which is not expected to occur. They are evidences of a power which it is hoped will not be required. The utility, however, is never lost sight of; for mark how such objects dwindle in our regard when we learn that they are counterfeits—that the “jewels” are glass, and the “gold and silver” mere gilding.

Sunset and sunrise beauty depend on the atmosphere and the clouds—two essentials to mundane life. The innate utility of such phenomena consists in the additional light they enable the sun when sinking to shed on the earth by reflection and refraction, together with the incomparable brilliancy, richness, and variety of their colours.

The utility of skating and other outdoor pastimes consists in the health derived from air and muscular exercise, together with the increase of dexterity and skill which accompanies every successful exertion of power on our part. We are advantaged in being able to diminish friction

¹ “Seven Lamps of Architecture,” chap. iv. § 21.

and overcome or subjugate the laws of nature to our will, and to exhibit our dexterity and skill to those around us. The utility of dancing is confined to the suppleness, agility, and grace imparted to the body by the exercise, together with what lesson may be learned by keeping pace correctly with the music.

The utility of steeples lies in attracting attention from afar and calling the stranger and sojourner to worship, while that of pinnacles and other architectural features is akin to that of the costume of ecclesiastics, and serves to proclaim the character of the building and to distinguish it from surrounding structures.

CHAPTER V.

III. BEAUTY ATTACHES ONLY TO UTILITY—*continued*.2. *Subjective Utility.*

SUBJECTIVE utility admits of the same division as objective, and consists in knowledge, which teaches us either (1) how to avoid pain, or (2) how to secure pleasure. And as objective utility relates to material things upon which the senses can work, so this relates to immaterial thoughts upon which the faculties can operate. The above division does not indicate two kinds of utility: it merely exhibits two aspects of the same thing. For utility is a relative term and necessarily implies both the objective and subjective elements. If I wanted to cross a dyke fifteen feet wide, and had but two planks each less than fifteen feet long, it would be as necessary for me to know how to make use of my planks as to have the planks to make use of. I might as well know how to adjust the planks and not possess them as possess them and not know how to adjust them. Any one, therefore, who will tell me how to utilise my planks, when possessed, will do me as great a service as he that supplies me with the planks to be utilised. As under objective utility, therefore, we considered chiefly the materials which operate on the mind, we shall now address ourselves more particularly to the mind which operates on the materials.

Objective utility springs from what is materially serviceable; subjective utility from what is morally profitable. Some tangible advantage must underlie the first; some

didactic lesson must be derivable from the second. If these conditions be not fulfilled there will be no beauty, and, consequently, no admiration. We have seen this to be the case in the first department of utility—the objective; we shall now proceed to test it in the latter department—the subjective.

Subjective utility appertains, as was said, to the mind. In entering this department of beauty we shall find some difficulty in keeping clear of ethical considerations which meet us half way; for æsthetics and ethics join hand in hand; beauty and virtue embrace each other; so that before we can finish the first we must have begun the second. It is no part of our business, however, to investigate the basis or details of moral philosophy or the laws of duty, inculcated by appeals to reason and ending in wisdom. Our purpose is to investigate æsthetic science, or the laws of beauty inculcated by appeals to fancy and ending in admiration. It is our purpose not to discuss the causes of those virtuous principles of conduct which beget love, but to inquire into the qualities and phenomena of matter which occasion admiration.

Matter or material qualities can, of course, beget admiration or awaken emotion only mediately and indirectly by means of the intellect, just as a blow by a mallet on a croquet-ball sends another ball lying hard by flying off across the lawn, without having actually touched it at all. It must be remembered that as genius is only an advanced form of knowledge, so virtue is only a higher form of beauty; and as we respect the learned but reverence the great, so we admire the beautiful but love the virtuous. Thus as reverence is only deep-rooted respect, so love is only deep-rooted admiration. There is no difference in kind between the two emotions; the distinction must be sought for in the degree of feeling and in the thoughts by which it is raised. It may seem a contradiction to assert that love is only advanced admiration, since brutes, who are undoubtedly capable of love, not only for each other,

but for man, are apparently as incapable of admiration. The paradox, however, is only superficial. Love is the very first instinct which any sentient being manifests, and its primary form is *self-love*; but as self is not sufficient for self, this self-love is refracted to what serves and sustains self—to food, to heat, to shelter, to parents, to kindred, and to whatever will, as Hobbes puts it, “serve its turn.” This love is simple enough, and it is easy for brutes to feel it, for it is nothing more than a better form of desire. Man, however, is capable of more than this. He can contemplate with a delicate affection things he cannot love and scarcely desires. He can divide his emotion into two; he can *stop at admiration* for things which serve another’s turn but may never serve his own. As the appropriate emotion for just actions is approbation and for virtuous conduct is love, so the appropriate emotion for beautiful qualities is admiration, for sublime qualities is awe, for ugly ones disgust, and for mean ones contempt. Now all these æsthetic emotions are partial forms of stronger ethical ones, the stronger being common to almost all sentient creatures, while the partial forms are apparently peculiar to man. Thus admiration is love curtailed, disgust is hatred halved, awe is terror cut short, and contempt is resentment in little; and while brutes are capable of feeling love, hatred, terror, and resentment, they are incapable of admiration, disgust, awe, or contempt; a coincidence, moreover, which throws light upon the fact that when any of these stronger emotions are present, the mind cannot experience the partial forms.

Starting, then, from this great fact, that in the division of beauty we are about to consider—that which attaches to subjective utility—there must be knowledge of some kind communicated to the intellect, or good of some kind promised of an intellect, we may call this subjective utility, this knowledge, or this good, a *moral*; and we shall seek to justify the proposition by a consideration of beauty as exhibited, first, in the human features; secondly,

in statuary, which deals with persons; thirdly, in painting, which deals with persons and things; and fourthly, in poetry, which deals with persons, things, and conduct.

Human features.—We are all judges of beauty and ugliness in the human form; but it does not follow because we all are judges that all our judgments are equally just. If there were no erroneous judgments there could be no degrees of taste. We are all judges of the future consequences of actions, and necessarily so, but it does not thereby follow that all our anticipations are equally correct, for in that case there could be no degrees of wisdom. In respect of taste, or æsthetic pronouncements, mankind may be divided into three sections—a right, a centre, and a left. The right are those few who of themselves discover paramount truths, who instruct the rest, and whose opinions are pre-eminently judicious. The centre is the mass who are incapable of discovering great truths, but not incapable of appreciating them when discovered and explained by others, and whose opinions are characterised by what is called “common sense.” The left are those whose intellect is so incurably perverted that they are neither capable of discovering anything new, of appreciating it when explained, nor of pronouncing with certainty in any matters of taste.

If a face is decreed by half a dozen persons to be beautiful, and by another half dozen to be plain or ugly, it does not follow that there is no such thing as a standard of beauty for the human countenance. For if the central many are equally divided, we must call in the advice of the right minority, the pre-eminent few, or those among them who have made the subject their special study. Again, if a face is decreed by six persons to be handsome and by one to be ugly, it does not follow that the matter is one of opinion, and that there are no certain rules whereby to decide as to what is beauty and what is not. How often do we hear a conversation like the following:—
“Is she not very pretty?” “Do you think so? I was

really thinking how plain she is. I cannot say that I see any beauty in her face." "Well, they say 'every eye forms a beauty,' and I suppose it is all a matter of taste, and cannot be accounted for." That it is all a matter of taste is certain, but that it cannot be accounted for is wholly untrue. Taste implies judgment, and judgment is an exercise of the intellect; and as there is great disparity in the capacity of intellects, there will necessarily be great disparity in the judgments they form. A poor and paltry intellect will bring in foolish and short-sighted verdicts, while a strong and comprehensive one will make far-sighted and discreet calculations. This is common reason, and, in fact, a truism. If, therefore, I admire a face which a friend of mine thinks ugly, what am I to do? There is only word for word, opinion for opinion; and although I may believe my judgment to be right and suspect my friend of a vitiated taste, it is evident that he may suspect mine in like manner, and thus we shall never convince each other. In such a case I must take a poll of a large number of persons, our peers, and if the vast majority of these pronounce in my favour I shall be satisfied—and perhaps my friend too—that I am right; if against me, I shall begin to suspect that I was wrong. If they are equally divided, we shall lay the matter before those who are known to be specially conversant with these subjects, whose sentence under such circumstances will probably be that the face in question is neither very beautiful nor very ugly; that it possesses some admirable qualities, but lacks others of equal importance, or betrays certain suspicious symptoms. I shall then discover, perhaps tardily, that I had attributed too much to an expression here and too little to one there; that I had overvalued this feature and undervalued that, and so on. But to conclude, because there is difference of opinion about the beauty of faces, that there is no law or rule of human beauty at all, were as false and foolish as to say, because there is difference of opinion as to the morality of actions, that there is no

such thing as wisdom. Let the votes of the common-sense multitude first be taken, and they are generally right on reasonable questions: if they are evenly divided, let the masters and teachers be appealed to, and their arguments weighed and sifted. If one man admires a dandelion more than a primrose, I am not content to hear that it is "all a matter of taste," that one plant is as beautiful as the other according as it is thought so, and that there are no rules to go by in pronouncing upon such questions. No! I am satisfied the man belongs to the left minority, and that his understanding is incorrigibly perverted. I shall poll the people and find what they have to say before I admit the whole matter to be an unaccountable mystery.

Neither in the human countenance nor in anything else is there any absolute and independent beauty or ugliness. We never admire a face for its own sake or for any direct utility which it may yield us, since another person's nose, for instance, is neither useful nor injurious to me, nor is one person's mouth serviceable or hurtful to another. We admire or dislike a face for the human *mind* that lies behind it. This mind may be very useful or very injurious to me. It may be adorned with virtuous qualities, or disfigured by vicious defects; and observing from the experience of many years that the virtuous qualities we love generally accompany certain corporeal features, and vicious qualities we hate certain other corporeal features, we come in time so closely to associate the mental qualities with the bodily features, that the latter seem of their own accord to suggest the former. It is for this suggestiveness that we admire features, though our conclusions in such matters are empirical and entirely dependent on experience, since there is no more *necessary* connection between a beautiful face and a virtuous mind than between the meaning of a word and the number of its letters. This fact, therefore, it will be observed, brings the whole process of human beauty and admiration for it

under the reflex principle, and I do not deny that the process is the necessary result of our constitution. We make corporeal features promise mental qualities, and we then admire or despise the features according as the qualities they promise are advantageous or disadvantageous.

Human beauty, notwithstanding, presents us with the most difficult of all æsthetic problems. There is no department of taste in which so many and so great mistakes are liable to occur, and are actually made. "Virtue dwells with beauty;" this is the condensed announcement of a general truth, the epigrammatic embodiment of accumulated observation. It is not an invariably admitted fact, for many persons repudiate the proposition altogether. But whoever denies that certain corporeal features tend to become the outward expression of mental qualities, the material index of immaterial contents, resists the verdict of all civilised communities of the past as well as of the present. It is the people themselves who have made this law of cause and effect, and it is with the common sense of the majority that we have to deal. We act upon this law of cause and effect every time we admire a particular countenance and feel attracted towards the possessor of it. No face is ever admired but some predilection is felt for its owner. Did we believe that no connection were traceable between a corporeal feature and a mental quality, we should never admire one feature more than another; for all admiration is caused by suggestiveness, and all the casts of human countenance are so similar that their powers of suggesting material qualities are not appreciably different. If, therefore, they do not suggest mental qualities, there is nothing left for them to suggest. Whether rightly or wrongly, however, certain features *are* believed to bespeak certain kinds of mind; and though men may be deceived in their calculations over and over again, they have too much experience of this connection to abandon the facts of physiognomy.

From this premise, therefore, I shall start, for I am not concerned to humour the unsubstantial theorising of those whose beliefs not only violate the common convictions of the majority, but contradict the conclusions of those philosophical thinkers who have made the question a subject of practical investigation and of prolonged attention.

Character is written not only in the features of the face, but in every limb of the body. Nay, more. Character is discoverable in the voice, in the gait, in the handwriting, in the odour of the person, and in many other particulars "if we had the trick to see it." I do not say that a man's *whole* character could be deciphered from his voice or gait; but some part at least—how much I shall not divine—may be made out from his tone of speech or his manner of going. Common phraseology alone could indeed warrant this conclusion, for peculiarities of voice and of walk, when they are sufficiently marked and distinguished, are termed *characteristics*. I do not claim that carrying the doctrine to this length is in accordance with the common convictions of the people, for the simple reason that the people know nothing about the abstruser parts of this or any other science, whose elementary laws, however, they continually recognise. Popular convictions, when they get beyond what is reasonably plain or probable, are out of their depth, and have no data to go upon; consequently they cannot be said to exist at all. It is, however, in entire harmony with the laws of reason and well within the limits of legitimate inference to say that corporeal and mental features go hand in hand; that every mental quality has its corporeal representative, and that all changes of character produce corresponding changes of countenance. It is not pretended that any one is sufficiently skilled in physiognomy to be able to read all these changes; it is simply proposed that while some of these alterations are so legible that almost every one can read them, some are revealed only to those who have served

their time to the science, and that others again are so subtle that they are discernible by no one.

The elementary principles of physiognomy are admitted by almost all, and from those principles may be deduced a science of whose length and breadth its originators never dreamt. I shall put those principles to the test. I shall take four persons, two women and two men, and setting them before a multitude, ask for an opinion as to their probable characters; and I undertake to say that, unless there be a few of the hopelessly perverted—the left minority—present, I shall obtain a unanimous decision from the throng. I undertake to say that all with one accord will declare that this maid's modestly blushing countenance, her spotless purity of skin, her delicate regularity of mouth and eyes and nose, her upright carriage, her glossy locks flowing down over her shoulders, her cleanliness of garment and her whole picture bespeak a mind of more innocence, kindliness, sincerity, nobility, purity, and virtue generally, than the form of yonder wench with bloated face and leering eye, with large and brazen mouth, with upturned nose, with tangled hair and crooked attitude. Similarly I shall undertake to say that all will pronounce this old gentleman's aspect, with his silvery hair well kept, with fine skin and healthy complexion, with harmoniously proportioned brows, well-closed mouth, perpendicular nose, straight and open gaze, broad and parallel frontal furrows, and easy tread, promises more truth, consistency, wisdom, and benevolence than that of yonder tramp-like figure, with matted hair and dirt-engrained skin, with oblique and lowering eyebrows, with sidelong scowl, with crooked and intersecting wrinkles, and shuffling walk. These principles of the science of physiognomy are in fact so well known and so universally acknowledged, that it is impossible to describe a countenance intelligibly, or to read a description of one, except in language referable to qualities of mind rather than of matter. For example, a *cheerful* eye; a *melancholy*,

a *searching*, a *dull*, a *scrutinising*, a *bashful*, a *sinister*, a *voluptuous*, a *spiritual* eye; an *intellectual* nose; a *witty*, a *crafty*, a *noble*, a *poetic*, a *talented* nose; an *effeminate* mouth; a *sensual*, a *cruel*, a *firm*, an *eloquent*, a *tranquil* mouth; a *weak*, a *determined*, a *yielding* chin; a *calm*, an *earnest*, a *serene* brow; or a *wild*, a *violent*, a *flighty*, a *weak*, a *perplexed* brow; a *noble*, an *intelligent*, a *retentive*, a *learned*, a *dignified* forehead; or a *bad*, a *poverty-stricken*, a *mean*, a *foolish*, a *poor*, an *untalented*, an *unintellectual*, an *incapable* forehead; a *gay*, a *merry*, a *thoughtful* expression; a *vacant*, a *suspicious*, a *timid* expression; a *crafty*, a *cold*, a *selfish* expression; a *knowing*, an *earnest*, a *scrutinising* gaze; a *sober*, a *resigned*, a *pious* air; a *snappish*, a *censorious*, a *critical* countenance: these are among the epithets most commonly used to describe corporeal features even when unmoved by passion. When under the influence of any emotion the terms are still more pronounced: a *savage* look, a *malignant* grin, a *fiery* eye, a *fierce* scowl, a *wicked* glare, a *ferocious* frown, a *loving* look, a *tender* gaze, a *sympathetic* glance, a *forgiving* look; a *compassionate*, an *affectionate*, a *pitying*, a *sweet* expression; a *sulky*, a *sneering*, a *jealous*, a *cunning*, a *suspicious* expression; a *nervous*, an *alarmed*, a *startled*, a *fearful*, a *frightened*, a *terrified*, a *horrified* expression, are among the epithets we employ to characterise the change.

It is to be noted, therefore, that there is almost no way of describing the countenance, either when the mind is at rest or when it is agitated by passion, except in terms applicable to states of mind and not at all to qualities of matter. Were we to describe the expression of a horrified man as an elevation of the *frontal* and contraction of the *corrugator* muscles, an expansion of the *orbicular* muscles of the eye, a contraction of the *platysma*, an expansion of the *labial* muscles, and a tension of the *pyramidalis* of the nose, and so on, no one but a specialist would understand what was meant. If, therefore, the most pronounced characteristics of a mind at rest are registered in the

face, and if all the characteristics of a mind in great commotion are still more clearly registered, why should we believe that the principle is incapable of being carried to its logical conclusion, or deny that it obtains in the entire phenomena of human expression? What is acknowledged by all is but the A B C of the subject, the primary axioms, and it would indeed be most extraordinary if this alphabet and those axioms were incapable of elaboration. What is very marked and often seen is easily recognised, and this is in fact the measure of the people's knowledge in such matters; what they read is but the title-page and the big letters; but it would be idle to deny that the book contains any further information because the majority are unable to decipher it. If strong mental qualities avowedly stamp themselves upon the face, so that all can read them, it fairly follows that slight qualities necessarily stamp themselves on the face also, though all cannot read them; and that even extremely subtle qualities write themselves there too, though none can read them. This is the fair inference of acknowledged premises, and why should that be denied to physiognomy which is granted to every other science—the possession of untold secrets, of incredible wonders? The reason is evident; nothing has ever been *conceded* to any science; all admissions which are secured have been wrung from the understanding by the sheer force of demonstration. The details of physiognomy have not been established, consequently the subject is not yet a science. The *rudiments* of the science, however, are established in the convictions of all reasonable men; and not only established, but acted on daily and hourly; and in those rudiments it is evident that the science has a potential existence, that its details are there, are true, and will one day be admitted as axiomatic. “The time, I hope, will come,” says Lavater, “nay, I might almost promise the time shall come, a better time, when every child shall laugh that I was obliged to demonstrate this—laugh perhaps at the age, or, which is

more noble, weep to remember that there ever were men who required such demonstration." The rudiments of astronomy were in the old astrology; the rudiments of chemistry were in the ancient alchemy; but before chemistry or astronomy had become a science, had people been told of half the wonders and marvels they would open up, or of half the truths they would bring to light, they would have rejected the propositions as preposterous. The fundamental laws of physiognomy, in like manner, are not only generally recognised, but almost universally acted on by men and women; and it should not at all surprise us if we were to discover that *every* quality of the mind has its corporeal expression, and may be deciphered in time by those who will pay attention to the subject. Every one has a different character, but every one has also a different countenance; every one has a different understanding, but every one has also a different voice; every one has a different manner, but every one has also a different gait; every one has a different conscience, but every one has also a different odour; every one has a different opinion, but every one has also a different handwriting, and so on. There is no difficulty in providing individuality characteristic and distinct—it is provided for us; the difficulty is to discover perfect resemblance, for that is not to be found either in the leaves of the forest, in the face, or in the mind of a man.

This essay is not written to establish a science of physiognomy, but in the department of beauty with which we are dealing it is necessary to show that some ground exists for supposing a connection between certain virtuous, qualities of character, and certain beautiful features of body; and how can this point be determined, or how can most reliable information be obtained, but by appealing to those who have laboured longest and most successfully in this department of inquiry, who have submitted their propositions to the severest tests, to patient observation and long-continued experiment, who have gone abroad

collecting facts and collating experiences, who have examined the human face in the courts of princes and the cells of prisoners, in the philosophic study and by the country hearth? If such men have found the fundamental rules of physiognomy abundantly confirmed and surprisingly extended, if they have, in fact, found that the morally good are the corporeally beautiful, that the most virtuous characters have the most beautiful countenances, that the morally degraded are also the corporeally deformed, and that the most vicious are the most hideous, may we not take it as a fact in nature, that not only the marked and emphatic, but also the slightest and most subtle characteristics of the mind are registered in the countenance, if only we had the key by which to translate them? In questions of this kind, then, let us go for information to the highest authorities, to those who have devoted their time, their attention, their talents to the subject, and who are also fitted by nature to improve on whatever they attempt. True there are dupes and impostors in physiognomy, but there are dupes and impostors in every science; in politics there are upstarts and demagogues; in divinity there are mountebanks and pharisees; in medicine there are quack doctors, and in law pettifogging lawyers, side by side with the most distinguished. This, however, does not deter us, when we want to know a point of law, from going to a lawyer, or, when we want to know a matter in medicine, from going to a physician, or, when we want to know a problem in theology, from going to a theologian. True, we constantly deceive ourselves in our judgment of appearances, but this is not because nature is contradictory, but because we are ignorant.

In seeking for the connection between beauty of body and beauty of mind, to whom shall we go but to the most distinguished apostles of physiognomy—to those who have visited every state and variety of life, the dungeon, the market-place, the town-hall, the judicial tribunal, the legislative assembly, the poet's parlour, the chemist's

laboratory, the slums and alleys of the city, the dens of vice and misery, and the haunts of devotion, piety, and love—who have taken note of all, watched and weighed, compared and calculated, pondered and reasoned? Lavater's work on physiognomy is by no means a household book in England, partly because the science is difficult, and partly because the work is expensive when complete, and nearly worthless when incomplete. No one, however, who examines that work impartially can, I think, come to any other conclusion than that virtue and beauty have some affinity for each other, and that vice and deformity are boon companions. Let us hear that author's opinion after a long experience in the matter. Speaking of some engravings representing the faces of fools, he says,¹ "no person will expect from this open mouth, this chin, these wrinkled cheeks, the effects of reflection, comparison, and sound decision. From the small eyes in both, the wrinkles in the under [portrait], their open mouths, no man whatever will expect penetration, reasoning, or wisdom. That physiognomical sensation,² which, like sight and hearing, is born with all, will not permit us to expect much from the upper profile, although to the inexperienced in physiognomy the proper marks of folly are not very apparent. It would excite universal surprise should any one possessing such a countenance pronounce accurate decisions or produce a work of genius. Figure (5) is still less to be mistaken; and I would ask the most obstinate opponent of physiognomical sensation whether he would personally declare or give it under his hand that the man who expects wisdom from this countenance is himself wise?"

The mistake which is commonly made is that of classing all general peculiarities under the same heading, and then objecting to the science that the realised results do not agree with the postulated rules. For example, a partially

¹ Lavater, "Essays on Physiognomy," translated by Thomas Holcroft.

² He means the natural power of appreciating physiognomical truths.

open mouth may be the sign of folly, of villainy, or of erratic talent, and the people, not troubling themselves about such trivial distinctions as the precise shape of the mouth, the attitude of the lips, their looseness or compression, the figure or size of the aperture, the expression of the eyes, or any of the other details of the countenance, deny altogether the trustworthiness of physiognomical calculations, because they find an open mouth accompanying folly in one person, vice in another, and talent in a third, which they think a palpable contradiction, choosing rather to accuse Nature of caprice than themselves of ignorance.

Speaking of one very ill-looking face, Lavater says—"Nature forms no such countenance, at least no such mouth [which, be it remarked, is open in the portrait]; vice only can thus disfigure—rooted, unbounded avarice. Thus does brutal insensibility deform God's own image. Enormous depravity has destroyed all the beauty, all the resemblance." Of another wretch he remarks that it is "a degree still more debased, a countenance by vice rendered fiend-like, abhorrent to nature, in which fallaciousness is sunken almost below brutality. Every spark of sensibility, humanity, nature is extinguished. Distortion, deformity in excess; and though sensuality should not appear with this particular kind of ugliness, yet may it not incur ugliness still more dreadful? Whoever has frequently viewed the human countenance in houses of correction and jails will often *scarcely believe his eyes*, will shudder at the stigmas with which vice brands her slaves." Another pair—a woman and a man both of the most revolting appearance—he characterises as "the last stage of brutal corruption, apparent most in the under part of the male profile, and in the forehead and nose of the female. Can any supposition be more absurd than that such a countenance should be the abode of a wise, a virtuous, or an exalted mind?" In another portrait—a greedy-looking monster—he finds "unbounded avarice,

unfeeling wickedness, knavery unequalled in the eye and mouth eradicate every pleasing impression. It is possible this countenance might not have looked much better previous to its degradation, but vice only could produce the full effect we behold. . . . We turn with horror from nature thus debased, and rejoice that millions of people afford not any countenance so abominable."

The celebrated Grecian profile must be objected to for the simple reason that it is not natural, and therefore ought not to occasion admiration. We never see such profiles in human beings in the flesh; why, therefore, should they be placed in human beings in marble? Were we to be told that a certain countenance was peculiar to angels, we should doubtless consider it the standard of perfection, and copy, adopt, and represent it everywhere. We should insert this profile whenever the occasion did not preclude it, and busts and statues, prints and paintings, would abound with this angelic form. Something of this kind has been the fate of the Grecian nose. We all admire and applaud the Greeks as the first and greatest nation of artists, poets, and philosophers; and believing that they themselves possessed the peculiar profile they have handed down to us, or else that their artists had some mysterious information concerning the standard of beauty, ideal perfection, super-mortal comeliness, we are content to take their judgment on trust and inherit their admiration. After such faces have been looked for in nature, however, and looked for in vain, it is mere servile reverence for antiquity, slavish respect for tradition, the obduracy of custom, and the attachment to anything with vague but captivating associations, that secures admiration for what is only seen in marble, in paint, and in hair-dressers' windows. "We have here," says Lavater, speaking of one of his portraits, "what is called a Grecian beauty, the famous descent of the forehead to the nose in one continued right line; but can any person having a sense of truth and nature suppose this natural and true?"

I will never more pronounce such words if any such living profile can be found, or, were it possible to find such, if the person who possessed it were not blockishly stupid. This countenance is, in fact, merely imaginary, and only betokens the vapid and unimpassioned countenance of a maiden; the eye is as perfect marble as the eyebrow and the whole profile. The cavity between the under lip and the chin, with the arching of the chin itself, notwithstanding apparent beauty, are either stone or at least extremely inanimate."

Some female profiles, however, which do occur in nature, and which all will probably recognise as natural, are exhibited in Lavater's work. Of one of these the author remarks—"The under part of the profile is least defined and characteristic, but how much is this negligence compensated by the firm intelligent correspondent of what is above! How capable are such profiles of maternal duties! How careful, how orderly, how economical! How respectable by their meekness, their gentleness! O miraculous Nature! how dost thou imprint truth upon all thy works, and bestow the credentials of the powers with which they are intrusted!" Of another he writes—"Here or nowhere are conspicuous respectable tranquillity, fortitude, simplicity, superiority, a freedom from passion, a contempt for the mean, and a propensity to the natural, the noble, and the great. This countenance, though silent, is more eloquent than hundreds that speak. It looks and penetrates, has the power of forming just decisions, and, in a single word, to pronounce them irrevocably."

A very small difference in profile may indicate immense difference in character; trifling diversities, however, are always overlooked by the multitude, who can only attend to what is marked and unmistakable; hence the errors into which they fall when expecting from one person the same talents or disposition as another, where the two countenances resemble each other in general outline or expression; hence, too, the shallow observations so

frequently urged against a science of physiognomy. How often do we hear persons speak of others as having very unmeaning faces and yet peculiar penetration of mind. True, such faces to the uninitiated may be and are unmeaning, because, resembling truly unmeaning faces, the delicate differences which redeem them from meanness and constitute them sublime are not appreciated by common observers. The objection, which may be easily and fairly answered by the general want of knowledge of the subject in question, and the difficulty in acquiring it, Lavater deals with thus—"The assertion requires proof. For my own part, after many hundred mistakes, I have continually found the fault was in my want of proper observation. At first, for example, I looked for the tokens of any particular quality too much in one place; I sought and found it not, although I knew the person possessed extraordinary powers. I have been long before I could discover the seat of character. I was deceived, sometimes by seeking too partially, at others too generally. . . . Many years ago I was acquainted with a great mathematician, the astonishment of Europe, who, at first sight, and even long after, appeared to have a very common countenance. I drew a good likeness of him, which obliged me to pay a more minute attention. I found a particular trait which was very marking and decisive. A similar trait to this I many years afterwards discovered in another person, who, though widely different, was also a man of great talents, and who, this trait excepted, had an unmeaning countenance, which seemed to prove the science of physiognomy all erroneous. Never since this time have I discovered that particular trait in any man who did not possess some peculiar merit, however simple his appearance might be."

The converse objection, that we often meet with silly persons who have very expressive countenances, Lavater thus discusses—"Who does not daily make this remark? My only answer, which I have repeatedly given, and which I

think perfectly satisfactory, is that the endowments of Nature may be excellent and yet by want of use or abuse may be destroyed. Power is there, but the power is misapplied. The fire wasted in the pursuit of pleasure can no longer be applied to the discovery and display of truth. It is fire without light, fire that ineffectually burns. I have the happiness to be acquainted with some of the greatest men in Germany and Switzerland, and I can upon my honour assert that of all the men of genius with whom I am acquainted, there is not one who does not express the degree of invention and powers of mind he possesses in the features of his countenance, and particularly in the form of his head."

Similarly, "vice with a fair face, beautiful wickedness, plain virtue, ugly honesty," &c., are common expressions, and stock weapons of attack to be used against physiognomy. Such objections, however, though not without a superficial foundation, are without a rational basis. The conclusion to which Lavater's observations conduct him, that the most virtuous are the most beautiful, the least virtuous the least beautiful, and the most vicious the most hideous, is thus elaborated and the torrent of opposition answered—"I only affirm that beauty beautifies, that vice deforms. I do not maintain that virtue is the sole cause of human beauty or vice of deformity; such a doctrine would be absurd. Who can pretend that there are not other more immediate causes of the beauty or deformity of the countenance? Who would dare, who would wish to deny, that not only the faculties of the mind, but the original conformation in the mother's womb, and also education, which depends on ourselves, rank, sickness, accident, occupation, and climate are also many immediate causes of beauty and deformity among men? My proposition is perfectly analogous to the maxim that virtue promotes worldly welfare and that vice destroys it. Can it be any real objection to this truth that there are many thousands of the virtuous wretched and of the wicked prosperous? Is

any more meant than that, though there are indeed many other inevitable and co-operating causes of happiness and unhappiness as well as virtue and vice, yet morality is, among others, one of the most active and essential? The same reasoning will apply to the proposition concerning physiognomy: beauty beautifies, vice deforms; but these are not the sole causes of beauty and deformity."

It may, however, be fairly maintained that all the changes effected by physical and accidental means differ radically and essentially, but too nicely to be distinguished by us, from alterations produced by voluntary mental causes. Does not every virtuous person *feel* baser, both in body and mind, after having committed some sin? Do they not feel that they have a less dignified expression and less moral influence? Are they not conscious of less power and less perfection? Do they not perceive that they have "lost somewhat of upright stature"¹ through their fault? Do they not know that if such faults were to be continually indulged in this degeneracy of mind and of body, of aspiration and of features, would become conspicuous and permanent? Indeed it is impossible to put the matter more explicitly than Lavater himself has done—"I have known handsome and good young men," he says, "who in after years have been totally altered. They were still generally termed handsome, and so indeed they were; but, good God! how different was their present from their former beauty! . . . Men, on the contrary, may be found with ignoble dispositions and passions, the empire of which has been confirmed by education. They may for years have been subject to those passions, till they have become truly ugly. Such persons may at length combat their vices with their whole force, and sometimes obtain no small victory; they from the best motives may restrain, and even eradicate, the most glaring, and in the strictest sense of the word may be called truly virtuous. There is a moral judge, whose decision is infinitely superior

¹ Mr. Tennyson's "Harold."

to ours, that will behold in such persons greater virtues than in any who are by nature inclined to goodness. These, however, will be brought as examples of the deformed virtuous. So be it; such deformities, nevertheless, are only faithful expressions of the vices which long were predominant, and the multitude of which do but enhance the worth of present virtue. How much greater was the deformity of the features before the power of this virtue was felt, and how much more beautiful have they since become! . . . I walk in the multitude, I contemplate the vulgar; I go through villages, small towns and great; and everywhere, among all ranks, I behold deformity, I view the lamentable, the dreadful ravages of destruction. I constantly find that the vulgar collectively, whether of nation or village, are the most distorted. . . . Let us compare the inhabitants of a house of correction, where we find the stupid, the indolent, and the drunken, with some other society in a more improved state. However imperfect it may be, yet will the difference be visible. . . . Let us add to this an inseparable truth, which is, that not only the flexible parts of the countenance, but also the whole system, bones and muscles, figure, complexion, voice, gait, and smell, every member corresponding with the countenance may be vitiated and deformed or rendered more beautiful. . . . Each frequently repeated change, form, and state of countenance impresses at length a durable trait on the soft and flexible parts of the face. The stronger the change and the oftener it is repeated, the stronger, deeper, and more indelible is the trait. . . . An agreeable change by constant repetition makes an impression on, and adds a feature of durable beauty to, the countenance" (and an analogous remark applies to disagreeable changes). . . . "A number of such beautiful changes, when combined, if not counteracted, impart beauty to the face, and many deformed changes impart deformity. . . . Morally beautiful states of mind impart beautiful impressions, therefore the same changes inces-

santly repeated stamp durable expressions of beauty on the countenance," and the like of vicious changes and deformity.

The great difficulty of distinguishing the slight but important differences that register themselves in the countenance in obedience to the dictates of mental propensities, the difficulty of judging of the *direction* in which a mind is travelling, cannot be too strongly insisted on. Indeed this difficulty is so great, that, until it is removed by closer study and more precise results, it will ever prevent physiognomy from being ranked among the sciences, and perhaps even from being considered as a profitable study, or a reliable source of information. It is a difficulty which causes the most painstaking physiognomist to be himself constantly deceived in his judgment, and one which operates so potently against all other persons, that most people are never tired of declaiming against the deceitfulness of appearances. Nevertheless the elementary principles of physiognomy are so evident, that nobody will cease to put their trust in them: we will neither abstain from preaching against the fallacy of appearances nor yet refuse to act upon those very appearances. Hence Shakspeare makes Duncan, when deceived in his opinion of Cawdor, denounce physiognomy as an untrustworthy creed—"There is no art to read the mind's construction in the face; he was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust." And hence also he makes Miranda, when Ferdinand is accused by Prospero of meanness and treachery, defend him by saying—"There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple; if the ill spirit have so fair a house, good things will strive to dwell with it." The same opinion runs, sometimes wittingly, sometimes unwittingly, through every kind of poetry, and many indeed are the verses dedicated to "a countenance in which did meet sweet *records*, *promises* as sweet;" and even where the conduct is denounced, features that are admired are ever held to carry some sanctification with them; "for

passions linked to forms so fair and stately *needs must* have their share of noble sentiment.”¹

If the principles above cited or advanced be just—and I must confess my inability to understand how they can be proved otherwise—we need go no farther to show that the beauty of the human countenance attaches, like all other beauty, to utility; for if we admire a face because it teaches us where superior mental qualities are to be found, because it is the herald of a virtuous mind, does not this mean that we expect some good from the owner of the countenance? Do we not look for advantage from the person whom we believe to be upright, sympathetic, and sincere? Do we not anticipate some benefit, either directly to ourselves or indirectly through others, from one whom we believe to be honest, faithful, and benevolent? Do we not connect something good, either intellectually to the understanding or tangibly to the senses, with one whom we regard as self-denying, honourable, and open-hearted? Do we not look for an improvement to society, to mankind at large, and thus ultimately to ourselves, from such characters as we call pure-minded, conscientious, patient, temperate, forbearing, loving, compassionate, long-suffering, generous, gentle? And do we not apprehend mischief, trouble, danger, annoyance, injury, want, unpleasantness, degradation, shame, &c., from the absence of the above-named virtues or from the presence of their contraries—deceitfulness, dishonesty, insincerity, truculence, treachery, malignity, meanness, avarice, spitefulness, heartlessness, cruelty, selfishness, revengefulness, greediness, ingratitude, ill-temper, petulance, impatience, coldness, intemperance, craftiness, faithlessness, cowardice? And, lastly, do we not expect nothing good, profitable, beneficial, advantageous, pleasant, or agreeable, but rather what is inconvenient and vexatious, and mortifying and humiliating, from those who are without virtue and without vice—those who are weak-minded, empty-headed, foolish, igno-

¹ Wordsworth's "Ruth."

rant, imbecile, idiotic, silly, stupid, incapable? If this be so, we can readily account for the many and various degrees of beauty, ugliness, and plainness into which we have divided personal appearance in our own species. We admire the beautiful because they are virtuous, and thus advantageous; we despise the ugly because they are not virtuous, and thus not advantageous; we hate and fear the hideous because they are vicious, and thus dangerous; for the most abominable countenances are properly described, not as mean or ugly, but as hideous, since we do not condemn so much as fear them.

Statuary and Painting.—This being the case, we have ample explanation of the admiration which is accorded to the works of sculptors and painters; for those classes of workers confessedly deal with what is beautiful and sublime; and, indeed, their profession absorbs most of the meaning attached to the word *artist*. All such artists are obliged to be anatomists and physiognomists of no ordinary stamp; they are supposed to have a correct appreciation of human beauty in its most perfect forms and types; and they are expected to bring those forms and types before the common gaze in order that it may be instructed as to what it should admire and what it should esteem. It is their chosen office to draw public attention to what is admirable and estimable, to familiarise the public eye with what is comely and excellent, and, by eliciting general applause for what is magnificent, to promote reverence for what is great and love for what is good. Hence every piece of sculpture and every piece of painting should contain a moral or a lesson in life or conduct. It is not enough that men and women are portrayed with fidelity; the women so portrayed ought to be beautiful and the men handsome or sublime. It is not enough that scenes and episodes are depicted to perfection; the scenes ought to be desirable and the episodes praiseworthy. It is not enough to applaud the execution; we should appreciate the moral. Thus the utility of statues and

pictures is didactic ; such objects "teach the young idea how to shoot," and fill the mind with aspirations after what is noble, and illustrious, and good. Every statue and every picture which violates these conditions is not beautiful, is not admirable. If the features are not beautiful or handsome or great, if the scene does not teach a lesson in one or other of the virtues, from the thrift of the cottage to the self-sacrifice of the martyr, the work will be faulty, disappointing, and in bad taste. True, such works are wrought, and true, people are found to admire them. True, we sometimes see representations of the ugly and the wicked, and of scenes without any indication of humanity, without a human being, without a house, without a ruin, without anything whatever to connect the picture with mankind, and true, persons are found to praise and purchase such works. But this is no more an argument against the necessity of utility in beauty than irrational and perverse decisions are an argument against the necessity of wisdom in virtue. Persons have been found capable of holding almost any opinions, however foolish or perverted ; but reason, argument, education will inevitably undermine such errors ; culture will reclaim what ignorance yielded ; maturity will demand back what inexperience advanced.

Statuary deals chiefly with persons ; painting with persons and things. The latter may include the fairest scenes in nature—the valley, the mountain, the meadow, the sea ; but there ought to be a ship on the sea, a mower in the meadow, a peasant on the mountain, a maiden in the valley. There ought, at least, to be some element of human nature present. If not, there can be no moral, no utility, and therefore no beauty. Ugliness is sometimes depicted in order to elicit our disgust, but this mode of inculcating morals is negative compared with the other. It is, therefore, much less effective, and consequently much less practised.

Poetry boasts a wider empire than the other arts, for it

embraces persons, things, and *conduct*. It has been already shown that poetry is the liberation of beautiful analogies ; it must now be shown that the beauty of poetry, like every other sort of beauty, attaches only to utility, and that the utility of poetry is akin to that of statuary and painting, and consists in the inculcation of a moral. Few persons will, I presume, be inclined to deny that there is a very large element of morality in all true poetry, for that is the natural result of the greater scope of subject, which, by the addition of human conduct, is possessed by the art. If it be urged that there is a great deal of poetry that contains no moral, I reply, there is a great deal of "poetry" that is not poetical—a great deal which passes for poetry, but which is not poetry—as there is a great deal which passes for beautiful painting which is not beautiful. Surely everything that pretends to be art is not art ; surely all that glitters is not gold. In every true poem, even, there is a great deal that is not poetic ; there is necessarily much that is merely narrative or descriptive, and which, though it helps to make the poem, is not itself poetry. "The curfew tolls the *knell* of parting day"—this is poetry, because a *knell* is for the dead, and it is only as a metaphor that we can apply it to the day. The next two lines, however—"The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea, the ploughman homewards plods his weary way,"—are description only, and may be literally true ; they are not productive of analogy, and therefore cannot be termed poetry. All true poetry obeys the same law. The purpose of a poem, whatever its subject, must be the inculcation of a moral. If this condition be ignored, though the piece be in verse, though it be in rhyme, though it be witty and ingenious, it will not be in good taste or it will not be poetic ; for what is poetic is admirable, and so-called poetry which is without a moral is not in good taste, is not admirable. When I say that some things which are admired are not beautiful, I must be understood to mean that a just education and true culture

is the only arbiter in matters of this kind. A good taste I take to be not that which points us to something independently, externally, eternally, or necessarily true, but simply that which will stand the test of ages; and a false taste that which will blow over, perhaps in the lifetime of the admirer, perhaps in the course of a few years. Many things which we ourselves once admired we now think of with as much contempt or disgust as we regard the codes of beauty which savages adopt.

The application of the foregoing remarks to the vast majority of verse productions, their subject and their aim, will present no difficulty; whether the theme be melancholy or merry, sanguine or despondent, pious or patriotic, martial or peaceful, stern or tender, public or domestic, national or cosmopolitan, we shall, if we look for it, find the moral, or it may be series of morals, intended to be taught. If the subject-matter of the poem be an animal, the animal will be clothed with personality, and made to speak feelingly to us of others and ourselves; if it be an activity of unreasoning nature or of unsentient existence, the activity will in like manner be humanised, appropriated, and endowed with moral eloquence, which association alone can bestow. To prove these propositions would be to go over the whole range of poetical composition, and to point out what, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, is perfectly obvious. In the hundredth case the moral might not be very perspicuous, but it would as certainly be present if the piece or verse belonged to true poetry.

The remarks above, applied to the subject of a poem as a whole, apply also to the subject of its details, and, as in architecture, the same principle of utility which rules the whole regulates the part. If it be essential that the main theme should teach the understanding as well as touch the soul, it must also be essential that the minor accessories—the adventitious images—should teach as well as ornament, should elevate as well as illustrate, should ennoble as well as enlighten. All poetic imagery, in other words,

must be founded on utility. This proposition may be tested by the number of analogies already cited in Chapter III., any further additions to which would be wearisome. It may, however, be advisable to verify the assertion negatively by showing that when the analogy is not beautiful, when the image is not the subject of utility, when it is not itself suggestive of admirable things, it cannot be poetic and will not be admired.

WIT THE LIBERATION OF ANALOGIES NOT BEAUTIFUL.

If neither the theme to be illustrated nor the object referred to as an illustration be capable of entering into poetry—if, in other words, neither the suggesting subject nor the suggested object be itself beautifully suggestive—the comparison, though it may be witty, cannot be poetical. A simile to be poetical must, as has been remarked, elevate and adorn—in other words, excite admiration; and this it can only do by establishing a relation between two beautiful things; so that when either the suggesting subject or the suggested object is mean or ugly, the result, though it may be mirth or ridicule, cannot be admiration. An examination of any standard work of wit or humour would, I think, confirm this proposition; but as the subject is immensely extensive, we must content ourselves with handling only a very small portion of it. It will, I presume, suffice briefly to overhaul some of Falstaff's similes and metaphors as specimens of wit sufficiently representative and cosmopolitan.

Falstaff, when he would describe the effect of a lady's eye, does not indulge in "sapphires set in snow," or in the raining of influence, or in stars, or planets, or spirits. His comparison is a burning-glass—"Her eye did *scorch* me up *like a burning-glass*." A burning-glass is an object with which, when brought to bear on the human skin, we associate mischief and pain; it is, therefore, not a thing beautifully suggestive or calculated to enhance by com-

parison the influence of a lady's gaze ; the effect, therefore, is mirth or ridicule, and not admiration. So, again, when melancholy is to be illustrated, the illustration Falstaff uses is very far from being poetical. Melancholy in the hands of a poet is a noble and a powerful instrument for liberating beautiful metaphors—"A tongue *chained up* without a sound, . . . a sigh that *piercing mortifies* ;" a "pensive *nun*, devout and pure, . . . a *goddess* sage and holy, . . . whose *saintly visage* is too bright to hit the sense of human sight," &c. To Falstaff melancholy suggests "the *drone* of a Lincolnshire *bagpipe*," a simile to which Prince Henry adds, "a *hare*, or the melancholy of *Moorditch*." Moorditch was a filthy morass in the moat outside the city of London wall, and lay between the posterns called Moorgate and Bishopsgate ; and as to the *hare*, Mr. Staunton, in his "Shakspeare," throws some light on that analogy by quoting from Turberville's book on "Hunting and Falconry" the following passage :—"The hare first taught us the use of the hearbe called wyld succory, which is very excellent for those which are disposed to be melancholicke. Shee herselfe is one of the most melancholicke of beasts that is, and to heale her own infirmitie she goeth commonly to sit under that hearbe." This sally of Prince Henry's may fairly be fathered on Falstaff, for "I am," says the latter, "not only witty in myself, but the *cause* that wit is *in other men*." In each of the foregoing examples of wit—a lady's eye compared to a burning-glass, and melancholy to the drone of a bagpipe—one of the factors is sufficiently noble to enter into poetry, as we have seen ; but being brought into contact with a factor relatively mean or contemptible, the result is comedy. In the following examples both factors are mean, or the noble one, as before, is made to appear so by comparison, and the effect is produced by the action and reaction of one upon the other.

A wildfowl might, indeed, be the subject of a poetic reference in regard to its lofty flight and free career, but when we

come to look for its "valour" in the presence of a sportsman, the animal drops below the poetic level. We are not less inclined to smile, therefore, when Falstaff tells us that "there is no more valour in that Poins *than in a wild-duck*," than when he declares that he himself fears not "*Goliath with a weaver's beam*," because he knows also "life is a *shuttle*." The knight belittles the credit of his hostess by telling her, "There is no more faith in thee than in a *stewed prune*, nor no more truth in thee than in a *drawn fox*." Falstaff's pecuniary extravagance is thus commented on by himself—"I can get no remedy against this *consumption* of the purse; borrowing only lingers and lingers it out, but *the disease is incurable*." This allusion is a little more than wit and less than poetry. Falstaff frightens Sir John Coleville into surrendering himself by comparing the sweat which the conqueror would lose in killing him to the tears of a lover—"Do ye yield, sir? or shall I sweat for you? If I do sweat, they are the *drops of thy lover's tears*, and *they weep* for thy death; therefore *rouse up*, fear and trembling."

Pistol, the parasite, hangs out of Falstaff like a corpse from a gallows or a weight from a crane—"Hang no more about me; I am no *gibbet* for you." The metal of this Pistol is not of the most sterling kind; for when the hostess becomes hysterical and trembles "an 'twere an *aspen leaf*" at the approach of swaggering Pistol, Falstaff allays her terror with the following assurance—"He's no swaggerer, hostess; a tame cheater he; you may stroke him as gently as a *puppy greyhound*; he will not swagger with a *Barbary hen* if her feathers turn back in any show of resistance"—an illustration which may be compared with the wild-duck valour of Poins. Being admitted to the inn, however, Pistol creates a brawl and must be put out. Bardolph is commissioned to expel him, to throw him like a quoit down the stairs—"Quoit him down, Bardolph, like a *shovegroat shilling*." Bardolph, however, being himself a man of the same kidney as the offender,

finds the task more than enough for him, and Sir John himself must assist. Having driven out Pistol, therefore, Falstaff returns and resumes his seat muttering, "A rascal bragging slave; the rogue fled from me *like quicksilver*."

The greatest part of Falstaff's wit is expended on his associates, who, being for the most part men of the vilest character, present an ample target for his raillery. Of this target Bardolph's nose is the bull's-eye—"Thou art our *admiral*, thou bearest the *lantern in the poop*; but 'tis in the nose of thee. . . . I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a *death's-head* or a *memento mori*. I never see thy face but I think upon *hell-fire* and *Dives that lived in purple*, for there he is in his robes burning. . . . When thou rannest up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus* or a *ball of wild-fire*, there's no purchase in money. O thou art a perpetual *triumph*, an everlasting *bonfire-light*. Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in *links and torches* walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern. But the sack thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that *salamander* of yours with *fire* any time this two-and-thirty years." And again—"The fiend hath pricked down Bardolph irrecoverably; and his face is *Lucifer's privy-kitchen, where he doeth nothing but roast malt-worms*." Even after the old knight's death this man's nose is a source of jocularitv, for when the hostess has made an end of relating the manner of Falstaff's going hence, telling how that "his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babbled o' green fields," and did "fumble with the sheets, and play with the flowers, and smile upon his fingers' ends," and the good woman "knew there was but one way," and how "he's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom,"—we have this posthumous witticism recorded by the boy—"Do you remember a' saw a flea stick upon Bardolph's nose, and a' said it was a *black soul burning in hell-fire*?"

No man could be better calculated to call forth Falstaff's contempt and scorn than Robert Shallow, esquire, a meagre, poor-spirited, tattling creature, turned by the wheel of fortune into a country justiceship with the possession of land and beeves. "I do see the bottom of Justice Shallow, . . . every third word a lie duer *paid* to the hearer *than the Turk's tribute*. I do remember him at Clement's inn, *like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring*. When a' was naked, he was for all the world *like a forked radish with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife*. . . . You might have thrust him and all his apparel into *an eelskin*: the case of a *treble hautboy* were a mansion for him." "If I were sawed into *quantities*, I should make four dozen of such *bearded hermits' staves* as Master Shallow." "I have him already *tempering between my finger and my thumb*, and shortly will I *seal* him." "I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow to keep Prince Henry in continual laughter the wearing out of six fashions. . . . Oh, you shall see him laugh till his face be *like a wet cloak ill laid up*."¹ Both the factors in this latter simile are absurd: a face wrinkled by laughter and retaining those wrinkles afterwards is no fit subject for poetry, any more than the creases in a wet garment; both are ridiculous.

Falstaff's recruits are thus made merry upon: "My whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, slaves as ragged as *Lazarus in the painted cloth* where the glutton's dogs licked his sores, and such indeed as were never soldiers but . . . the *cankers* of a calm word and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged *than an old-faced ancient*. You would think I had a hundred and fifty tattered *prodigals lately come from swine-keeping*, from eating draff and husks;" you would think I had "*unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies*: no eye hath

¹ Compare with this Swift's description of the countenance of an Aolist while preaching to his disciples with his face as it does with *that of the sea, first blackening, then wrinkling, and at last bursting it into a foam*."—*Tale of a Tub*.

seen such *scarecrows*." His second detachment of reinforcements—Wart, Feeble, Bullcalf, Shadow, &c.—are thus rallied before Master Shallow: "Here's Wart; you see what a ragged appearance it is; a' shall charge you and discharge you with the motion of a *pewterer's hammer*; come off and on swifter *than he that gibbets on the brewer's bucket*. And this same *half-faced* fellow, Shadow; give me this man; he presents no mark to the enemy: the foeman may with as great aim level at *the edge of a penknife*."

With all this scorn and banter Falstaff does not spare himself, but is indeed sufficiently candid concerning his own peculiarities: "I am as poor as *Job*, my lord, but not so patient." I am a "*tun* of man, . . . a *wassail candle*, all tallow;" and when carried in the name of foul clothes to Datchet lane, I was like a "*barrel of butcher's offal*. . . . The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned a bitch's *blind puppies*, fifteen in the litter, . . . and I have a kind of *alacrity* in sinking," and had I been drowned and swelled by the water, I should have become "*a mountain of mummy*." Afterwards his belly was as cold as if he had "*swallowed snowballs for pills*," though ordinarily he is "*as subject to heat as butter*, a man of continual *dissolution and thaw*"—so much so, he says, that they might "*liquor fishermen's boots* with me." After the exploit on Gadshill, he observes: "My skin hangs about me *like an old lady's loose gown*. I am withered *like an old apple-John*." When told to lie down on the ground and listen for the tread of travellers, "Have you any *levers* to *lift me up* again, being down?" he asks Prince Henry; and yet, he continues, "When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not *an eagle's talon* in the waist." The cause of all this wit is easily divined—"A good sherris sack hath a twofold operation in it; it ascends me into the brain, . . . makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of *nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes*; which delivered o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit."

If the foregoing passages be analysed, it will, I think, be found, first, that wit, like poetry, is relative and consists of two factors, an illustrated subject and an illustrating object; secondly, that the ludicrous effect is produced in consequence of one of these factors being below the dignity of the other, or both being below the dignity of the occasion. If the subject be extended so as to include every species and description of humour, the same rule will, I think, be found still to assert itself.

CHAPTER VI.

IV. THE APPEARANCE OF BEAUTY VARIES INVERSELY WITH
THE APPEARANCE OF UTILITY.

BEAUTY is a relative term and implies two things—first, an objective quality of matter, and secondly, a subjective emotion of the mind. The objective quality consists in suggestiveness, the subjective emotion in admiration ; and where either of these factors is wanting the other is wanting also—no beauty can be recognised and no admiration felt. Furthermore, beauty is never found independent of utility : utility is its basis, its support, its root ; and, being removed, beauty dies and admiration ceases. Consequently, there can be no abstract beauty—no beauty pure and simple anywhere : while connected with utility we may admire and warmly laud, but with the cessation of utility our admiration is exhausted, and we feel the dawning symptoms of contempt. These principles, which relate to the nature and meaning of beauty and to the conditions of its existence, have been examined and tested in the foregoing chapters. We have now to prove that the *quantity* of beauty is regulated by a law no less stringent and complete than those we have dismissed ; a law which shows that the appearance of beauty is inversely proportional to the appearance of utility—that where the beauty increases in any object the utility diminishes, and where the utility increases the beauty diminishes, and this, too, whether the object be naturally adorned or artificially ornamented : in other words, though beauty and utility exist only as they coexist, yet in regard to their amount

they are always found in an inverse ratio. This position might be verified by travelling over the whole domain of beauty and examining all objects whatsoever in which the quality is admitted to inhere. This course, however, is out of the question ; and it will, I think, answer our purpose effectually to take a number of representative types from various classes of things, and a *prima facie* case being made out sufficient to warrant a recognition of the law, all who desire it can themselves pursue the argument farther, and establish its validity in more complete detail.

The multitudinous forms in which beauty is found or admired may be divided, for convenience, into three departments—things, places, and persons. We shall take these departments in their order, and endeavour to show that the more beautiful the thing, the place, or the person, the less useful it will be, and the more useful the less beautiful. I shall not in the following remarks observe any regular difference between natural and artificial beauty, for the rule applies whether the beauty is granted by nature or supplied by art.

Let us first consider those things which usually come under the head of *ornaments*—things that are thought capable of sustaining any amount of decoration, and on which, consequently, decoration is lavished in abundance. Take, for instance, jewellery, necklaces, brooches, lockets, rings, bracelets, earrings, fans, curtains, antimacassars, cushions, card-bowls, sachet-trays, flower-holders, picture-holders, screens, cabinets, caskets, albums, brackets, cornices, vases, jugs, candlesticks, spider-tables, tea-tables, occasional tables, whatnots, stools, ottomans, drawing-room timepieces, photograph-frames, match-holders, watch-stands, scent-bottles, snuff-boxes, and all the other drawing-room paraphernalia, kith and kin. Consider, also, the amount of enamelling, painting, carving, chasing, colouring, polishing, burnishing, turning, smoothing, gilding, and engraving, and note the representations, designs, patterns, and devices expended on such articles compared with the amount of

work they do and the return they yield. Not one of the above-named things belongs to the necessities of life, or is in any respect essential to the enjoyment of existence; they are all the surplusage of luxury, the cankers of a large patrimony and prolonged refinement; and yet not one of them is primarily and confessedly without utility, for it was before shown that no object avowedly useless could secure lasting admiration, and consequently none such can come within the range of beauty. I shall not stop here to particularise, but leave it to the common sense of the reader to determine whether there is any other than an inverse proportion between the beauty of the above-enumerated refinements of luxury and their innate utility. We before had some difficulty in making out the utility of flowers, jewels, sunsets, and other things decidedly very beautiful, but that is quite in accordance with the law proposed; and we ought to find no less difficulty in establishing the utility of that which is most beautiful than in making out the beauty of that which is most useful.

When now we come to a class of objects a degree more useful, we come to a class a degree less beautiful—objects whose increasing utility warns us that they are not capable of bearing the same amount of embellishment as their less useful kindred. In corroboration of this statement I may specify the following: purses, penknives, pens, spectacles, ink-bottles, desks, umbrellas, plates, saucers, cups, spoons, knives, forks, fire-irons, chairs, &c. It is to be noted that in these, as in all other classes of articles, whenever there is a sub-class, less utilised, set apart for public or particular purposes, or appropriated to occasions of unfrequent occurrence, that sub-class will for that very reason become capable of sustaining a greater share of ornament than its more useful brother class. For example, knives and forks, plates and dishes, spoons and vessels, which are used at dinner—or, at the main, the meat and vegetable part of dinner—are much less ornamented, much more sober, solid, plain, and unsuggesting, than those which are

reserved for dessert, sweetmeats, fruits, and miscellaneous delicacies. The latter sub-class are to be seen in cutlery and china shops, and at the tables of the wealthy, with a great variety and richness of ornamentation. The knives and forks and spoons boast the *lily*, *kings*, *Constantine*, *beaded*, and many other patterns; the blades being engraved, chased, pierced, and carved with flowers, fruit, leaves, twigs, creepers, birds, fishes, shells, and an endless catalogue of objects and designs. Cake-baskets, salvers, tureens, liquor-frames, cruet-stands, tea and coffee services, fruit plates, and generally such utensils as are brought out on state occasions only, obey the same law; for, appertaining only to the luxuries of life, they are made the subjects of profuse embellishment.

Passing on to articles still more useful than any enumerated, and coming towards, if not actually among the necessaries of life, we reach a class of things which are capable of very little ornament, and are in fact generally left plain. Of such may be specified articles of male attire, boots and shoes and socks, hats and coats, blankets, towels, soap, baths, sponges, brushes, ladders, pumps, gardening implements, carpenters', masons' and mechanics' tools, surgical instruments, lawyers' briefs, theological volumes, scientific and educational books, state papers, &c. We were, in a previous chapter, at pains to make out the utility of objects whose beauty is apparent; we shall have no difficulty in making out the utility of objects whose beauty is microscopic, and we might have much difficulty in making out their beauty, such being the natural result of the inverse ratio law. Happily, however, the beauty of the latter class of objects need not be made out, for the law is satisfied if the most useful objects be not mean or ugly. With the catalogue of articles last enumerated compare statues, fountains, and coats-of-arms; these latter are capable of almost any amount of ornamentation, but their utility is unquestionably small, while lamp-posts, pillar-boxes, and gasometers, things of great value and

self-evident utility, are considered capable of next to none. Wall paper is of little use, but it is often highly, and sometimes lavishly decorated, while newspapers, whose use is conspicuous and extensive, are never ornamented.

When we come to the necessities of life, things whose utility is paramount, we have reached a class of objects almost destitute of what is properly termed beauty, and which are, generally speaking, treated by men as wholly unfit for ornamentation. Meat, fish, fowl, bread, butter, porridge, potatoes, milk, water, salt, coal, candles, flannels, and underclothing, are not looked upon as things of beauty, and are surely not rendered a whit more admirable by any adventitious embellishment. The reason is evident. Beauty depends upon suggestiveness; suggestiveness can only be appreciated by an operation of the intellect; the objects just mentioned do not suggest, they *assert*, and assert so much and so loudly that there is nothing left for the intellect to employ itself on; they assert their utility in so plain and unmistakable a manner, that all other suggestions or assertions are swallowed up in the process. Therefore it is that the most useful things are not improved upon by being ornamented: they do not exclude beauty, they *transcend* it; they do not prohibit admiration, they include it; they go beyond—long, long beyond—beauty. Artificial decorations, therefore, are here wanton and ridiculous; for how can we stop short at admiration for things which command our desire?

Subdivisions here exhibit equal confirmations of the rule. Comparing the articles of food which have become a staple stand-by in civilised countries with those that are less essential to existence, we find that the law still holds good (though it be left to nature to furnish the ornament); for surely bread, butter, water, porridge, the various kinds of meat, fish, and fowl, will be thought more useful but less beautiful than vegetables with their green tops and branching stems. Compare chops and steaks and cutlets with potatoes, peas, and carrots; compare a

loaf of bread with a cauliflower, and so on. Vegetables will, in like manner, be thought more useful but less beautiful than fruits. Compare potatoes, peas, beans, carrots, turnips, parsnips, cabbages, onions, cauliflowers, and artichokes with oranges, apples, peaches, currants, grapes, plums, raspberries, strawberries, and cherries, and fruits will, I apprehend, be pronounced more useful but less beautiful than flowers. Compare the fruits last named, and many others into the bargain, with geraniums, roses, dahlias, pansies, tulips, asters, hyacinths, fuschias, petunias, pinks, calceolarias, crocuses, polyanthuses, phlox, &c.

The same remark holds good of insects as compared with birds, and of birds as compared with quadrupeds. Compare such butterflies as the red admiral, peacock, tortoiseshell, Camberwell beauty, swallow-tail, gatekeeper, orange-tipped, fritillaries, coppers, blues, tiger moths, and many beetles, with the birds we are commonly accustomed to see, and I think the palm of beauty will be awarded to the insects; and compare thrushes, blackbirds, pigeons, goldfinches, bullfinches, chaffinches, robins, larks, linnets, swallows, sea-gulls, starlings, ducks, and geese, &c., with cows, sheep, horses, asses, goats, pigs, dogs, and cats, and I think the palm of beauty will be awarded to the birds. Tropical insects, birds, and quadrupeds are much more gorgeous and diversified than our British species, but will probably all be found to come under the same law. It would not be fair, however, to compare a particular member of one class or species with a particular member of another class or species for the purpose of upsetting the rule, because species or classes are purely an artificial arrangement. Tomatos, for instance, which are vegetable, would probably be thought more beautiful than pears, which are fruit; but the rule really holds good, for pears are much more useful than tomatos.

When now, amongst the above schedules, we again glance at sub-classes, we find that the law still maintains

itself; the more useful the vegetable, fruit, flower, bird, or animal, the less beautiful it will be found. Compare a dish of potatoes with a dish of celery, and do you not find the first more useful and the second more beautiful? Compare similarly a dish of parsnips with a dish of beet-root; compare cauliflowers with parsley; compare the various kinds of cabbage with the various kinds of lettuce; compare spinach, beans, and turnips with leeks, mustard, and pickling cabbage; and I think that in each of these cases men would prefer to be deprived of the most beautiful vegetable, and yet be disposed to admire the least useful. So in fruit, I think oranges, grapes, cherries, currants, raspberries, and peaches will be pronounced more beautiful than pears, apples, gooseberries, plums, damsons, and strawberries, which are commoner and more serviceable fruits; and the Chaumontel, which is one of the most valuable of pears, is certainly one of the least elegant. The beauty, however, of some of the last-named fruits of the second list may be equal to any of those in the first list, but the utility also may be much about the same.

The utility of flowers has been explained to consist, amongst other things, in colour and fragrance; and it so happens that these utilities, one of which is much more pungent and sensible than the other, are generally found inversely coexistent in flowers, so that a flower which boasts the best and brightest colour will have the least fragrance, and that which yields the most grateful perfume will show the dullest dress. Geraniums, pelargoniums, lobelias, fuschias, dahlias, asters, pansies, nasturtiums, chrysanthemums, tulips, crocuses, the ranunculus, marigolds, calceolarias, poppies, phlox, the gladiolas, balsams, rhododendrons, azaleas, the polyanthus, flowering verbenas, mimulus, and a great many others that might be named, display the most rare and brilliant hues, and are either destitute of perfume or have none worth talking of, or else, like asters and nasturtiums, have actually an

unpleasant odour ; while lavender, verbena, musk, mignonette, myrtle, heliotropes, primroses, may, meadow-sweet, jonquil, jasmine, clematis, lily of the valley, woodbine, lilac, and sweet-briar have but dull or indifferent colours, or else exhibit very little variety of hue, and yet yield the most grateful of perfumes. The martagon lily is of a most brilliant scarlet, and has no scent ; the white lily, which has no hue, has a very pleasant fragrance—and indeed it seems to be a rule that when any variety of a sweetly-scented species gains in colour it loses in odour ; the sweet-scented verbena is very unattractive in appearance, and the brilliant variegated verbenas are without perfume ; the primrose has very little variety of hue, being generally yellow, white, or of a pale slate colour, but its fragrance is universally loved ; “the polyanthus of unnumbered dyes,” as Shakspeare calls it, is a species of primrose boasting the most brilliant colours but destitute of odour. The flowers which “join scent to hue” are justly valued and esteemed as the best of all. Their number is not great, however. The rose is called the “queen of flowers” because it unites the most brilliant and various of colours with the most grateful and pleasant of perfumes ; hyacinths for the same reason take a very high place among flowers ; carnations follow suit ; furze is also brilliant and sweet ; the cytisus, the bonvardia, the stephanotis, and others may be mentioned, but flowers of this class are comparatively scarce.

As colour and odour in the flower, so plumage and song in the bird seem to coexist generally in an inverse ratio. Chaffinches, jays, kingfishers, wagtails, hoopoes, woodpeckers, shrikes, rollers, waxwings, sheldrakes, crossbills, pheasants, and peacocks are sufficiently gay, but have either no song or a very poor one ; while nightingales, wrens, larks, linnets, thrushes, blackbirds, sedge-warblers, hedge-sparrows, and pipits are comparatively plain, but sing very sweetly. A few birds, such as the goldfinch, robin, siskin, goldcrest, bullfinch, and golden oriel, both

shine and sing. Song-birds are few in number and small in size; they generally live near the habitations of men, and apart from their colour and their carol they are but of little use. The vast majority of birds are non-singers, and the most useful are usually the plainest in appearance. Let us compare a few of them.

Look at a domestic hen beside a golden pheasant; few birds are more useful than a domestic hen, and few are more beautiful than a golden pheasant. Compare ducks and geese and turkeys with pigeons, plover, partridge, grouse, sea-gulls, and woodcock; and compare the latter list with other birds less useful still—with peacocks, birds of paradise, parrots and paroquets, kingfishers, swans, eagles, lyre-birds, &c.

The like arrangement obtains amongst quadrupeds—the least useful being the most beautiful, and the most valuable being the plainest. Compare the most useful of all quadrupeds—sheep, cows, pigs, goats, asses, horses, elephants, dromedaries, and camels, with the least useful—stags, musk oxen, reindeer, elks, gazelles, antelopes, squirrels, foxes, civets, cats, genets, camelopards, and I think the inverse ratio rule will be recognised.

Looking again at sub-classes among quadrupeds, do we not find that, among horses, for instance, racers, hunters, saddle and carriage horses are much more beautiful but much less useful than great dray-horses, huge van, waggon, and cart horses, or than homely and unassuming hackney-cab, car, and omnibus horses? The latter do nearly all the real horse work in commercial countries, by carrying business people about town and enabling them to fulfil their engagements and discharge their duties, and by transferring merchandise, goods, and the necessities of life from place to place; while the former serve for racing and amusement and betting, for carrying huntsmen through fences and over farms and plantations, or for taking the affluent on pleasure rides and idle canters, and ladies on shopping expeditions. It were needless to wander among

details of this kind ; all nature is full of the rule, or the law, whichever it be. Let us therefore pass on to another class, viz., vehicles.

Among vehicles it will only be necessary to point out those which do the most work, and compare them with those that do the least, and the inverse ratio of coexistent beauty and utility will appear forthwith. What are those vehicles which do the greatest amount of work in civilised communities—which co-operate with horses in transferring corn, clothing, eatables, furniture, and building materials from one place to another, according to the requirements of existence ? Are they not carts and waggons ? And what are those which do the least amount of reproductive or important work ? Are they not private carriages, phaetons, victorias, landaus ? Look now at the respective beauty of these vehicles. Comparé the work done by an omnibus, either as regards importance or amount, with that done by a four-in-hand excursion coach, and then compare their beauty. Compare the work done by vans, drays, and cabs with that done by waggonettes, barouches, broughams, gigs, and dogcarts, and then compare their beauty. Consider the utility of a wheelbarrow and its beauty, as compared with the utility of a perambulator and its beauty. Estimate the utility of a train which gets over forty or fifty miles of ground in an hour, as compared with that of a steamer which gets over ten or fifteen miles in the same time, and then compare the beauty of the vehicles. Among ships, again, place the beauty of yachts, schooners, launches, and canoes beside that of brigs, merchantmen, sloops, lightships, barges, and boats, and then calculate their utility.

If we glance at shops, we shall find that they have been largely disposed of already by what was said concerning the various necessities and luxuries of life ; for if meat and bread, &c., have little beauty in detail, they will have no more in the aggregate. We shall consequently find but little to arrest our attention and but small time lost in

admiring butchers', bakers', and bootmakers' shops, but considerable attention and often much time accorded to jewellers', photographers', and toy shops. Compare the number of people seen gazing in at grocery, hosiery, and chandlers' establishments, with those observed lingering before depôts of antique art, oil paintings, and engravings, and then calculate the respective utilities of the institutions; compare the beauty of a dairy with that of a hairdresser's window, and then estimate the respective values of false hair and pomatums, and of milk and butter; compare the appearance of a fishmonger's shop with that of a lace depôt, and then note their use. So likewise greengrocers may be compared with fruiterers; fruiterers with florists; ironmongers with opticians; leather shops with naturalists'; book shops with china shops; and under-clothing with outer-clothing warehouses; and it will, I think, require but little ingenuity to make out the inverse ratio law.

Let us pass on to buildings, and ascertain if beauty and utility still fulfil their inverse promise. In architecture it is evident we come to a very important branch of beauty, and if the principle be violated here, the theory may fall to the ground altogether. First of all, then, let us ask ourselves, what are the most useful buildings in a country? Are they not indisputably the houses which the people inhabit? Take away their houses and the people must perish. Domiciles are the first erections in every country; they exist before any other building is thought of, and will remain after every other building has disappeared, as long as the land is peopled. Savages who know nothing of ornamental edifices have at least their houses to live in—tents or huts. Secondly, let us inquire what class of buildings are the least utilised? In civilised countries the answer must be—ecclesiastical buildings; for churches and cathedrals are utilised some of them but once or twice a week, others of them every day no doubt, but none of them by more than a small

proportion of the people and for more than a small portion of the day: none of these buildings, moreover, are necessary to existence; were all our churches and cathedrals to be swept away to-morrow, we could easily do without them; we could perform our devotions wholly at home, where they are already partly if not chiefly conducted, or we could avail ourselves on Sundays of other buildings whose week-day use is requisite to the common weal; we could make arrangements for performing our devotions in law courts, hotels, town-halls, libraries, museums, or even in temporary erections in parks and squares and commons. We could not, however, without great and tangible detriment, afford to have our school-houses, banks, law courts, or hotels swept away; while the destruction of our private dwelling-houses would be the annihilation of the community. Now, if ecclesiastical edifices and domestic habitations are at opposite ends of the pole as regards utility, not less evidently are they opposites as regards beauty. The former buildings are in general the richest, costliest, and most embellished, while the latter are, as a rule, the plainest, simplest, and most unpretending of structures. This will be made very palpable by an examination of the vocabulary employed in describing the parts of an ordinary house, as compared with that required to indicate the details of a cathedral; a few terms will exhaust the former, while the latter would fill a moderate dictionary. Houses consist of walls, windows, roof, door, rooms, hall, passages, stairs, closets, attics, and perhaps porch, balcony, parapet, and a few other features. Ecclesiastical buildings must first be of a certain school—Grecian, Norman, Gothic, &c.; while the details of these styles are endless. The following may be specified as examples:—the arch, of which there are several varieties—semicircular, triangular, stilted, segmental, horseshoe, pointed, complex-pointed, ogee, &c.; the capital, column, pilaster, plinth, abacus, baluster, buttress, flying buttress, portico, base, entablature, frieze,

arcade, reredos, screen, pinnacle, belfry, minaret, dome, turret, battlement, steeple, spire, lancet window, flamboyant window; double, oriel, and many other windows; canopy, cupola, and a large number of other departmental limbs and features. These limbs and features are adorned with multifarious decorations, and in diversified profusion. Thus we have fresco, diaper, and panel-work, hood-work, rib-work, fluting, moulding, and tracery; the cusp, crocket, jamb, mullion, transom, boss, finial, corbel, label, drip and spandrel, splaying, piercing, and so forth. Many of the terms here set down are but generic names, comprising under them a vast number of varieties. Moulding, for instance, may be of the lozenge, star, zigzag, indented, billet—prismatic, alternate and square,—double-cone, fir-cone, pellet, stud, cable, chain, keel, medallion, tooth, dog-tooth, dovetail, embattled, trellis, reticulated, bead, rib, beak-head, spiral, cylindrical, and many other patterns. Is it not evident, therefore, that the amount and richness of ornament lavished on churches and cathedrals in particular, is out of all proportion excessive, as compared with what is imparted to ordinary dwelling-houses and other very useful buildings? Palaces, ducal mansions, and theatres (inside) also come in for a large share of decoration; and these buildings are, perhaps, the next in the scale of utilisation, some of them being fully occupied but half the year or less, others being utilised but a few hours each day, and often for purposes of diversion. So, likewise, it is with other buildings; those that are really most utilised are considered incapable of sustaining much ornament, and are consequently very little adorned and very little admired, while those that are least utilised are most highly decorated. Compare lawyers' offices with bazaars; compare hospitals with museums; compare factories and warehouses with clubs and aquariums; compare the interior of a bank or a law court with that of a concert hall or a banqueting hall.

Architectural ornament being a very important depart-

ment of beauty, it may be worth while to trace the law in sub-classes, to test it in the detailed disposition of decoration on the various parts of any single building—say a common substantial dwelling-house. What, then, we have first to inquire, is the most useful, the most indispensable part of such a building? Certainly the roof, for that keeps off the rain in wet weather, the snow, hail, and frost in cold, and the sun's rays in hot weather. Least of all parts of a building could we spare the roof. What is the next most important portion? Evidently the main walls, for they afford shelter from the keen blast and partially mitigate the rigour of all the elements—heat and cold, rain and frost, hail and sleet. Before all things provide a roof; but if you will not provide the roof, let us have the four walls; for while the first is better, the second is good. "Consider," writes Mr. Ruskin,* "the difference in sound of the expressions 'beneath my roof' and 'within my walls;,' consider whether you would be best sheltered in a shed with a stout roof sustained on corner posts, or in an enclosure of four walls without a roof at all, and you will quickly see how important a part of the cottage the roof must always be to the mind as well as to the eye, and how from seeing it the greatest part of our pleasure must continually arise." After the roof and walls come door and chimney, for there must be a way for dwellers to get into a house and for the smoke to get out, or the structure would still be of little use. After these a window is the next desideratum; for it is highly desirable, on sanitary grounds as well as for convenience, to admit the light and air freely. Other features are of less importance. A porch outside the door, as well as parapets and balconies, are matters of comparative indifference; and as for terraces, turrets, pinnacles, and battlements, they are of so little importance that they are but seldom seen on common dwelling-houses.

Now it is precisely in the reverse order of that above

* "Lectures on Architecture and Painting," Lect. I.

indicated that ornament is lavished on the limbs and features of a house. Porches, where they do occur, are the most elaborately sculptured and tastefully decorated portion of the whole building. In a porch, if in any part of a house, you will find Doric or Ionic capitals, or else Corinthians overflowing with foliage; there, if anywhere, you will find arches and an entablature, a balustrade, tracery, mouldings, and other decorations; and if there is a balcony, its parapet will be sculptured, pierced, or pillared. Next come the windows, much more modestly beautified; nevertheless, the dripstone is often made an excuse for a good deal of ornament, though much less than what is allotted to the porch. The main walls are not often troubled, but sometimes an opportunity is seized on for continuing on them some other ornament. Fancy stones are sometimes let in at the corners, the stories, divisions, or floors are sometimes expressed by flutings or chiselled ledges, and occasionally a slab with some name or date is the subterfuge. In general, however, the main walls of an ordinary house are let alone. The roof is the most secure from ornament of any feature of the building; true, it is usually the least conspicuous, but that is not the chief reason for its exemption. The *utility* of the roof is too great to sustain set-offs; it works too hard to be artistically tampered with; it is more admirable plain than it would be were it painted or decorated; ornament on it would be surplusage, would be out of place, out of taste, impertinent; unadorned it is adorned the most. We therefore do not compel it to bear a useless burden, as we do "not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn."

To travel, in like manner, through every particular of the interior of a building is not necessary. If further confirmation of the principle be required, let it be found in the comparative beauty and utility of the various apartments of an ordinary house. The kitchen is surely the most useful room, for we must have some place in which to pre-

pare our victuals, which are the necessaries of life; failing every other room, moreover, this one would serve also for a sitting and a bed-room. A drawing-room is surely the least utilised and the least frequented room; it is chiefly used for the reception of visitors. That the beauty of these rooms is inverse in amount to the order named, few will be disposed to deny.

The pointed arch is much more beautiful but much less useful than the round arch. Pointed arches are generally relegated to buildings which require no upper story, and which are therefore less serviceable than other buildings. This arch requires more space, more buttress machinery, and is capable of sustaining by itself less weight than the circular arch. The pointed arch, therefore, is to be found in abundance in cathedrals, abbeys, and churches, while the other is used in bridges, viaducts, tunnels, and substantial municipal buildings. Square-topped windows are much less comely, but in many ways more useful than arched; they admit more light and air, and offer greater facility for opening and shutting, for glazing and repairing, and for adjusting blinds and curtains; for most of our ordinary dwelling-houses, accordingly, the square-topped window is selected, while the arched is largely used in buildings of a less useful description.

The details of architectural ornament are generally very beautiful if well executed; but of what do they consist? Of vegetables and cattle? of meats and dishes? of furniture and clothes? of boots and hats? of cakes and roots? No; the inverse ratio law compels them to consist of something based indeed on pleasure, but on pleasure the least gross, the most intellectual; compels them to consist in leaves, buds, flowers, twigs, creepers, branches, and sundry forms of verdure, together with a small admixture of insects, birds, and a few other diminutive animals. These latter objects, too, it may be observed, form the vast majority of ornamentation, wherever occurring—on cups and saucers, vases, flower-stands, caskets, jewellery, card-cases, book-

covers, screens, mirror-frames, carpets, curtains, dress, &c. And this is easily explained. Admiration can only be caused by an operation of the intellect; a sculptured beefsteak or cauliflower, or any such gross utility, would not cause admiration, because the thing asserts its use so emphatically, proclaims its services so loudly, that there is nothing left for the intellect to do, no latitude for the play of the fancy, no suggestings, and therefore no admiration. Advertisements, for the same reason, are rarely looked on as things of beauty.

Having considered ornaments, utensils, foods, vehicles, shops, and buildings, let us turn for a moment to *places* in which utility or beauty is recognised. The public street is one of the most utilised of all places. Vehicles and passengers are continually hurrying over it. It is the medium of every kind of business and the general channel of locomotion. Yet the public streetway is not thought capable of sustaining any ornament. Compare with it the tessellated pavement of a palace or cathedral, and then declare which groundwork the country could best afford to lose. So likewise the streets, courts, and passages of a city are much more used but much less beautiful than country roads and lanes, which are considered lovely and charming. After what has been already said, there is no need to compare cornfields with vegetable-gardens, vegetable-gardens with fruit-gardens, or fruit-gardens with flower-gardens; but compare a well-trodden green or common with a well-kept square in regard to their utility and their beauty; compare a coal-wharf with a pebbly beach; compare a market-place with a private lawn; compare quays used for shipping and unshipping merchandise with boulevards used chiefly as promenades; compare a factory with a wood; compare a coal-mine with a dingle or a heathery hill; compare those well-utilised mercantile streets, filled all day with huge vans and waggons doing business, nothing but business, and a great deal of it, with those carriage-drives and esplanades fully utilised

but a few hours of the day, and then only for recreation and amusement; compare stable-yards and warehouse sheds with parterres and botanic gardens; compare an active seaport town with a fashionable watering-place; compare the city with the country; compare the sun with the moon.

From places we are naturally led to consider scenes, gatherings, entertainments, &c. Some of these, indeed, have so little pretension to beauty of any kind, that it seems incongruous to name the subject in connection with them. The reason, however, will be found, by the inverse ratio law, in the great utility involved. Other scenes in which utility is diminutive will be found to present a very beautiful or a very showy appearance. Compare, for example, a sitting of the House of Commons with a *conversazione*; compare a competitive examination with a fancy ball; compare a lawsuit with a levee; compare an arbitration case with a picnic; compare a political meeting with a fashionable reception; compare a scientific congress with a garden party; compare a cattle fair with an exhibition of arts; compare a herring fleet with a regatta; compare the sun at noon, when doing its greatest amount of work, with the sun just rising or just setting—and the co-existence of beauty and utility in inverse proportions will, I think, be plain. We might go on to compare the various kinds of trees, those which grow in the great forests that supply us with timber—the oak, ash, pine, fir, teak, beech, lime, sycamore, chestnut, elm—with those which grow in our gardens and squares, and supply us with shelter and shade—the holly, acacia, laburnum, thorn, willow, cedar, yew, laurel, birch, and bay. Hymns to the latter have often been sung, while the praises of the former are but seldom heard.

Literature and professional callings are not, it may be said, fit subjects wherein to look for beauty. Nevertheless, there is a general impression, and one well founded too, that certain kinds, both of study and employment, are

less calculated to call forth admiration, are less charming and attractive than others. Merchants, mechanics, shop-keepers, builders, engineers, farmers, schoolmasters, lawyers, bankers, and others, who perform the chief and hardest work in most civilised countries; will, for example, stand lower in the scale of æsthetic value than artists, naturalists, painters, sculptors, engravers, poets, musicians, architects, and others, who deal with the lighter branches of employment, with the refinements of civilisation, and whose work is less indispensable but more taking and attractive. So likewise it is with regard to books and study. Compare spelling, grammar, geography, history, and arithmetic with fairy tales, romances, fables, fictions, and novels; compare dictionaries with diaries, political economy with poetry, mathematical with magazine literature; compare law with biography, book-keeping with dramas, maps with pictures, essays with songs, books of medicine with books of travels; compare telegrams with valentines, ledgers with albums, time-tables with art journals, and so on.

We now come to the most exalted class of all—*human* beauty; and here I need hardly ask to which sex the palm belongs. I need not say whose features are the fairest and loveliest, nor inquire whose muscles are strongest and whose brain largest. Men it is who dig the ground, sow the land, reap the harvest, thresh the corn, hew down forests, blast quarries, smelt ore, sink coal shafts, sail the seas, catch fish, build houses, construct ships, lay railroads and telegraph cables, make roads, erect bridges, invent machines, make scientific discoveries, solve philosophical problems, defend the country and fight its battles,—in other words, contribute the largest share of work and energy to the maintenance of existence and the progress of the human race. To this sex then appertains the greatest share of power and sublimity. Women, on the other hand, discharge the lighter, minor, delicate duties, and to them belong in a pre-eminent degree the beautiful, the graceful, the comely, the soft and captivating attributes of human

nature. Nor is there in this arrangement any merit or demerit on either side. It is no time for the giving or taking of compliments; but thus nature has constituted us, and even thus we must suffer and behave. We have no choice in either case; the male sex *must* on the whole be the most useful; the female sex *must* on the whole be the most beautiful.

If we come to details, we shall find the same rule amply borne out. The female sex is universally recognised as that capable of sustaining the greatest amount of ornament, and the male as that capable of performing the greatest amount of work. The vocabulary of apparel forms a counterpart to that of architecture, and the respective wardrobes of the two sexes are significantly disparate. Let us take a look at them. Men have in general but a little dozen articles of clothing, while the attire of women knows no end. A hat, coat, waistcoat, trousers, boots, collar, and necktie exhaust the exterior dress of most men, while it would be difficult to enumerate all the articles which are seen upon women. Of the latter, instance the following:—Feathers, lace, sprays, head-dresses, wreaths, caps and fichus, ribbons, veils, artificial flowers, clusters for bonnets, stuffed birds, wings and buckles, ruffs and ruffles, tippets, lappets, shawlettes, collarettes, gauntlets, necklets, shoulder scarves, boas, garnitures, worked skirts, checks, twills, point embroidery, pleatings, tucks, flounces, slashed sleeves, fringes, rosettes, bows, tassels, sashes, buttons, beads, belts, gimp, furs, skins, capes, jerseys, polonaises, pelisses, trains, paletots, together with a vast number of articles of which men know nothing whatever. The materials, moreover, of which the above garments may be made are too many and various to be enumerated; and besides all this, ladies have special costumes for the morning, for the afternoon, for the evening, for walking, for riding, for dancing, for yachting, for the opera, for weddings, and other occasions. To the female sex also are allotted bracelets, necklaces, rings in profusion, ear-rings, brooches, lockets, solitaires, and other

jewellery. The most business part of one's attire is the pockets, of which men have generally eight, while women have only one, or if more, they are usually empty.

So, again, if we come to subdivisions of human beauty, we shall find that young persons are, *ceteris paribus*, considered more beautiful than adults. The element of sublimity is doubtless greater in the latter, but so far as beauty alone is concerned, it will I think be granted, as all poets have assumed, that the palm belongs to youth ; and as to the respective usefulness of the two ages there can be less question. Coming to another subdivision, we might compare the features of poets on the whole with those of philosophers on the whole : the good looks of the former are proverbial, and many instances might be given, while those of the latter are almost a thing unknown ; the utility of these two classes, however, is manifestly inverse.

Another subdivision would lead us to compare the different parts of the body with each other, and there we should find that the most useful are the least beautiful, and *vice versa*. Who ever hears of a beautiful stomach, or a comely liver, or handsome intestines ? And yet what part of the body can be more useful, more essential to existence, than those ? Compared with them, the lips, the nose, the eyes, the eyelids, brows, and ears are of very minor importance. It matters comparatively little whether we lose our sense of smell, of taste, of sight, of hearing, whether our eyelashes fall out, our complexion fades, our hair goes, or our fingers grow fat ; but it matters immensely whether our stomach refuses to digest, our liver to purify, or our lungs to filter. Another subdivision would indicate that the principle holds true even of the different features of the face. The eyeballs are surely of more importance to life than the lids or brows, yet it is by the latter that we calculate beauty of expression, for all normal eyeballs are much about the same. Again, the nose is surely of more importance than the eyes, since its information is more reliable, and we are oftener deceived

by sight than by smell ; yet the eyes are capable of much greater beauty than the nose. The mouth, again, is more valuable than the nose ; it is indeed absolutely indispensable to existence ; and, moreover, we are less often deceived by taste than by smell ; yet the nose is capable of greater beauty than the mouth ; and so on.

We have now examined beauty in several of its phases and departments—animal, vegetable, topographical ; that conferred by Nature upon flowers and fruits, birds and insects, plants and trees, and that supplied by art to ornaments, vessels, and utensils of various kinds. We have also touched on decorative beauty as it appears in the different sorts of vehicles, shops, and buildings ; the amount presented by the details of different kinds of architecture, and that expressed by scenes, places, and localities. We have also endeavoured to examine the comparative æsthetic value of the different professions, trades, and literary pursuits ; and, lastly, we have inspected the beauty exhibited by human beings of different sexes, different ages, and different mental characteristics, and by the different parts of the human body ; and it does seem in all these cases as if the amount of beauty were regulated by the amount of utility, and that the two quantities coexist in inverse proportions.

Many exceptions and objections might perhaps be urged against the principle herein put forward. It might be said, for instance, that a stable is less decorated than a mansion, and also less useful. In answer to this it may be remarked, that stables are generally in the rear of premises and out of sight, intended neither for the public to behold nor for visitors to gaze on ; but in other respects the objection is probably superficial. Stables may be less useful than mansions to society, but a stable is not less useful to the *horse* than the mansion to its master ; on the contrary, it is far more useful. The master has his halls, his landings, his staircases, his parlour, library, morning-room, dining-room, drawing-room, bed-rooms, kitchen, pan-

tries, &c., all in separate apartments; the horse has all these in one. The mansion, to be relatively as useful to the master as the stable to the horse, should have but a single room instead of a suite to select from. "A man's house is his castle." Consider all that this means where the house is small, humble, and fully utilised, compared with what it signifies where the house is really a castle or something better. In the former case it teems with suggestions, in the latter it means nothing; it is a mere truism.

Again, it might be objected that among dogs, sheep-dogs are about the most useful and also the most beautiful. Here again the objection is unsubstantial. To whom are sheep-dogs most useful? To country-people. To whom are they most beautiful? To towns-people. Sheep-dogs are beautiful to those who have no occasion to experience their utility—to city-folk, to seafaring men, to all persons, in short, who have often heard of the valuable sagacity of these animals, but have seldom seen it in operation. Farmers, shepherds, and drovers see no particular beauty in their sheep-dogs. I have known peasants to express great admiration at the sight of a very common-looking retriever, while they were completely indifferent to the charms of their own colley; for it is almost impossible to see much beauty in that which is very useful. Other objections of a like nature will, I think, be found similarly amenable to analysis.

There is one department of beauty left unnoticed, and we must put it also to the test to ascertain if it likewise be regulated by the inverse ratio principle. I refer to the beauty or grace of *movement*. There are useful movements and movements which are of but little use. Let us first consider human locomotion. The act of walking will hardly be denied to be one of the most useful movements a man can perform, and the act of dancing to be one of the least useful; but to the latter belongs by general consent a great deal of grace and elegance, while

to the former is accorded admiration at zero, or negative admiration. Sitting and lying down are the positions in which the greatest part of our existence is passed, and which everyone would probably choose in preference to any other for a continuance, were we obliged to make a selection. Neither of these postures, however, is as graceful as standing erect, which is, therefore, the attitude in which most statues are represented. Acts of useful locomotion are usually performed, when practicable, in a straight line, that being the shortest distance between any two points ; while fanciful but less serviceable movements are usually performed in curved lines. When a man wants to catch a train or a vehicle, to overtake a friend, to keep an appointment, or to arrest a thief, he runs forward so far as he can in a right line. A man on the ice, shod with skates for purposes of amusement and recreation, winds and curves, and sways, and turns, glides away, now to this side and now to that, and performs all sorts of marvellous evolutions ; and there can, I think, be as little question about the beauty of such movements as about their inutility. Similarly the movements of a man on crutches may be compared with those of a man on horseback—the first moving about from necessity, the latter for amusement. Ploughing is an extremely useful action, but not nearly so graceful as swimming, which in almost all cases is but a pleasurable pastime. Mowing is likewise an operation of great utility, but its movements do not secure the applause which skilful rowing calls forth. Scavenging and scraping the streets is a useful activity, but its movements cannot be compared with vaulting, an exercise but seldom turned to practical account. Compare, moreover, the movements of a tinker's fingers as he mends his kettle with those of a painter's hands as he coats the window ; yet it is much more desirable to have our kettles sound than our windows painted. Compare the action of a man digging in a field with that of a girl skipping with a rope ; compare the action of a smith at his anvil with that of an athlete at

is a fact that we do regard some of those qualities as assuredly innate, and others as purely associated; and it is both convenient and correct to observe this difference even in disquisitions professedly scientific, since any departure from it would have the appearance of affectation and the effect of general confusion.

The psychology of ugliness has been impliedly explained in treating of beauty, and need not now be investigated afresh. External qualities in objects cause sensations in the mind, which sensations beget certain thoughts and associations, and those thoughts and associations cause emotions; so that ugliness, like every æsthetic quality—sublimity, meanness, beauty—has its external basis in suggestiveness. Disgust, the appropriate emotion for ugliness, is not mere thought; it is a veritable feeling, consequent on a state of the intellect which leads us to dislike an object with an emotion stronger than contempt and weaker than hatred. Disgust, like admiration, is a delicate and refined emotion, and, like admiration also, is rather evoked by a variety of latent suggestions and incipient thoughts than by any intelligible proposition presented to the understanding. It is as incorrect to speak of an emotion of ugliness as to speak of an emotion of meanness, of beauty, or of sublimity.

Ugliness attaches only to inutility. There is, perhaps, nothing in the world that is absolutely useless; for when a thing ceases to be of direct service to us and becomes what is termed rubbish, it goes to form part of the dust of the earth on which we tread, or part of the vegetation which grows around us. Such utility, however, is not recognised, and we are unwilling to give anything credit for such indirect serviceableness. Inutility, like utility, is two-sided, and consists in what denies us pleasure or what causes us pain. Nothing, therefore, that is positively useful can be actually ugly. We saw in the foregoing chapter that the most useful things had the least amount of beauty, but that, forasmuch as we cannot despise or

be disgusted with such things, they cannot be ugly or mean.

Disgust, like admiration, is generated by suggestion and increases with suggestiveness. A thing may have a pleasant colour, a pleasant shape, and a grateful motion, and yet suggestion may say that the thing is ugly, and beget the disagreeable emotion of disgust in spite of the grateful sensations. A thing may have an unpleasant colour, an unpleasant shape, and an unpleasant motion, and suggestion may say that the thing is ugly, and beget the disagreeable emotion coincident with the unpleasant sensations; and we also saw in a former chapter, when considering beauty, that the agreeable emotion of admiration caused by suggested qualities often overrides the unpleasant sensations caused by innate qualities. In establishing the proposition that ugliness attaches to inutility, let a negative test suffice. Can we loathe or despise a thing that is useful? Can we contemplate it with disgust or contempt? If not—and I think the question must needs be answered in the negative—there is nothing left to loathe or despise but what is useless or injurious. Disgust (the antithesis of admiration) must not be confounded with contempt (the antithesis of awe). The former is a stronger and more unfavourable form of emotion; it leads to aversion and hatred, and here we are out of æsthetical and in ethical territory. Contempt stops short of anger, and is the appropriate emotion for meanness, the antithesis of sublimity, as will presently appear. As in beauty, there is an animal appetite coexistent with admiration, so in ugliness there is an animal aversion coexistent with disgust. In other words, as we always to some extent desire what we admire, so we always to some extent dislike what disgusts us. There are many nice shades of these emotions—admiration and disgust. But the difference in those shades in both cases is one of degree only, the difference in the cause being the thoughts and suggestions which occupy the intellect.

Ugliness has an empire as extensive as that of beauty, but it is evidently unnecessary to travel over the whole of it, since much that has been said concerning the psychology and conditions of beauty may, by a slight alteration of terms, be made applicable to ugliness. Unpleasant colours, shapes, and movements have been already explained, or attempted to be explained, as being the contrary of pleasant ones. It will therefore be unnecessary to inquire why they are disliked or disapproved, remembering only that the sensations are never in themselves ugly any more than they are beautiful. That mere colour is not ugly *per se* is evident from this, that many much-admired birds, and moths, and other insects are of a colour with mice, and lice, and other vermin; that mere shape is not ugly is evident from this, that diamonds, crystals, and ice are still beautiful though shaped like broken bottles or other fractured articles; that mere motion is not ugly is evident from this, that we cannot but regard the flight of a butterfly as beautiful or graceful, though its movements be confined to sharp angles and abrupt turnings.

To come, then, to some illustrations of the proposition that ugliness varies inversely with innate and directly with suggested inutility, we may with profit turn our attention first to such acts, conduct, or behaviour in our fellow-creatures as would probably be designated ugly rather than wrong, disgusting rather than hateful; let the following facts, therefore, be taken into account. Acts which other persons perform are much more suggestive, and fill us with anticipations, and consequently with emotions, much more readily than actions we perform ourselves. The acts of another are an index to his character; they are visible signs of the quality of the mind which suffers or dictates them. With those acts we connect a long list of other and similar acts; on them we construct a whole lifetime of conduct and behaviour. We have, indeed, no other evidence to reason from. We cannot get behind men's words and acts except *by* their words and

acts ; we cannot read men's thoughts or feelings except through their words and acts. Our whole knowledge of another's mind is therefore inferential. We can only judge of a tree by its fruit ; and as we are all very prone to judge, we never fail to form an estimate when there is the least datum from which to start. If our datum be propitious, our estimate will be favourable and our emotion agreeable ; if unpropitious, our estimate will be unfavourable and our emotion disagreeable. The majority of suggestions which co-operate in producing the emotion of disgust are, as in the case of admiration, latent ; we do not word them, we do not discern them, we do not recognise them, but beyond a doubt we feel their conjoint effect. Now we have no such unfavourable suggestions connected with our own acts ; we know that these will always be subservient to our personal good according to the light that is in us ; we are never apprehensive of becoming hostile, treacherous, or indifferent to ourselves ; hence, although we may regret having made mistakes and be sorry for our want of wisdom, our own behaviour, whatever it may be, never inspires us with the disgust which the conduct of others often does. Thus may be explained the disagreeable emotion with which we regard an ugly act in another person, and the absence of that emotion with which we reflect on the same act in ourselves. Hence, too, the ridicule we are inclined to heap on another when he has made a blunder or mistake, been the cause of an awkward accident or fallen into a trap.

We must not get involved in ethics, but shall have to confine ourselves as far as possible to such behaviour in others as we are disgusted with but do not hate. Observe now the difference with which we contemplate an ugly grimace, a foolish habit, a useless trick, an absurd eccentricity, a superstitious ceremony, or any other meaningless and unprofitable piece of conduct, when appearing in another person and when occurring in ourselves. Our reason often tells us, when we ourselves are the authors of

such acts, that they *are* foolish and useless, but because we have not the requisite associations connected with them, they never fill us with disgust. When, on the contrary, we see another person poke the fire badly, or let an article fall and be smashed, or shuffle about in an awkward and graceless manner, or utter unpleasant sounds by humming, whistling, shouting, croaking, or cause unpleasant noises by creaking, scratching, scraping, rapping, rasping, hammering, &c., we are invariably affected with a certain disgust which often ripens into hatred or into anger; whereas, when we ourselves are the actors, we invariably feel that there is no harm done, or that all will be well forthwith. Dirt or dust upon another person's garment calls up our disgust at the wearer; upon our own apparel it does not. A weakness or failing in another is often truly contemptible; it is a very different matter in ourselves. Personal deformity is subject to precisely the same rule; and the principle embodied in these coincidences is, *mutatis mutandis*, applicable to beautiful action, graceful conduct, or admirable behaviour.

If, however, any of the above-mentioned acts or circumstances be connected with utility as a basis, the whole aspect of affairs is changed, and with it our emotions also. If the shouting be that of a sergeant drilling a company of soldiers, if the rapping be for telegraphic purposes, if the humming be an exercise in music, if the scratching be for some secret signalling, if the rasping and hammering be the sound of carpentering, and so on, we are no longer disgusted. Thus utility disarms disgust and cuts the ground from under it.

In running over specimens of ugly objects, we shall find that all of them are useless, or appear to be so; that while they so appear they occasion disgust, and that when they cease so to appear their ugliness vanishes. What objects can be more decidedly mean or ugly than the following:—Worn-out boots and hats, rotten eggs, refuse eggshells, skins of fruit, withered flowers, decayed leaves and sticks,

broken jars and bottles, dead flies, odd bits of dirty paper, &c., old book-covers, dung, ordure, filth, putrid carrion, bad meat, mud and dust, slugs, bugs, lice, earwigs, nettles, and other weeds, stagnant water, soot, morasses, cess-pools? With such things as these we are often and much disgusted, but only because their inutility is their most conspicuous quality; they tend to breed discomfort and inconvenience and nuisance, bad smells, ill-health, sickness, fever, epidemics, pestilence, and death. Weeds, for example, are injurious to shrubs, plants, flowers, and grass; they grow in abundance, and where they are not wanted; their colour is, as a rule, dull, and their shape frequently unpleasant (though to this there are exceptions); their odour, when they have any, is usually offensive. These facts are sufficient to make weeds seem ugly, and sometimes more than ugly.

Let the element of utility become apparent in any of the above-named objects, and that object at once ceases to be ugly. Let the leaves, flowers, or dung become manure, let the mud be used in building, let the rotten sticks be stored for firewood, and the articles redeem themselves at once. They do not become amirable, it is true, but they cease to be disgusting. A foul odour is very disgusting, and makes us decidedly hostile to whatever it comes from; let the same odour, however, be generated by chemicals in a laboratory, for the purposes of some important experiment, and our disgust is almost annihilated, and the odour becomes much more tolerable. Few things can be uglier than the entrails of a fish flung upon the roadside and covered with flies. Should a passing surgeon, however, noticing in it some very extraordinary formation of organism, have it brought away, preserved in chemicals, sealed in a jar, and placed in a museum, the thing would cease to be ugly, and would become an object of interest and value.

As anything which assists the utility of something else is more or less beautiful, so anything which impedes the

utility of something else is more or less ugly; instance flaws in glass, cracks in crockery, rents in curtains, holes in carpets, garments, hats, boots, and umbrellas. Still, the *suggestions* are more potent than the faults. If a house had no glass at all in its window frames, it would, I think, look less ugly than if all the panes were broken. Plum-stones, fruit-skins, and eggshells, are sufficiently devoid of beauty under any circumstances; but mark the different emotions with which we would contemplate such objects on entering a room, if we were to see them on the dinner plates, and if we were to see them strewn upon the carpet. In the latter case we should have suggestions of carelessness, slovenliness, negligence, and dirt; and we would not, we could not, confine these characteristics to the treatment of those particular objects, or even to that class of objects; we should apply them to all the ways and words and works of the household, to the hours kept, to the rules observed, to the economy practised, to the principles maintained, to the life led. In fact, we should not know what to expect in such a family.

Personal ugliness has been impliedly explained in personal beauty. It may, however, be remarked, that red hair, which is more or less in general disrepute in particular countries, is no more ugly in itself than a red flower, a red book-cover, or the fire at which we warm ourselves; it is *per se* no uglier than black, brown, or sandy hair, nor is one shade of red uglier than another; in fact, it was before shown that mere colour never can be ugly or otherwise. And more than this, we have no right to conclude that red hair, as a sensation of colour, is a whit less pleasant than any other shade, for the contrary is probably the case. The truth is that this colour in hair is held to be forbidding because, whether rightly or wrongly, it is adjudged to be the usual concomitant of questionable *features* and an unreliable *disposition*. Were this not so, red hair of whatever shade would be thought quite as beautiful and becoming as any other colour.

Very black and very light hair are also thought by many to observe the same rule as red, and these colours, therefore, are often regarded with somewhat of suspicion. They are not always so regarded, however, for the simple reason that such shades are not believed to be the invariable accompaniment of plain features, or to be infallible indications of unlovable characteristics. We all know that every shade of hair sometimes accompanies beauty of countenance, sweetness of temper, sincerity of action, and loftiness of sentiment.

All deformity is ugly because it suggests inutility, *i.e.*, hindrance in avoiding pain or in securing pleasure. From deformity of body we conclude deformity of mind. We do not look for genius amongst dwarfs or giants. We do not expect talent from the monstrous, or anticipate virtue from the ill-made. *Primâ facie*, such persons are below the common standard of power and of goodness; appearances are against them, and if they would dislodge suspicion or awaken admiration, they must do so by very positive and unequivocal proofs.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUBLIMITY.

1. *Sublimity attaches only to Power.*
2. *The appearance of Sublimity varies inversely with the appearance of Power.*

THE appropriate emotion for sublimity is awe, and whereas in deciding upon the existence of beauty in any object, the proper question is—Do we admire it? and in the case of ugliness—Does it disgust us? so the test for sublimity is—Does it inspire us with awe? The justness of this position will, I think, appear in the course of the following inquiry. Awe, like admiration and disgust, is a delicate and refined emotion, and, like admiration and disgust also, is apparently shared with the human species by no other animal. This emotion stops short of fear, which, being a coarser and stronger feeling, shatters and dislodges all gentler emotions in proportion to its presence in the mind. Fear must needs be a more vigorous and absorbing affection, because “fear hath torment.” Fear may be induced through that primary form of reason called instinct, while awe can only be awakened by a choice variety of latent suggestions, consequent upon and only possible with the advanced modification of reason experienced in reflection. As beauty has its root in pleasure—considering all pleasure as the absence of pain, and ugliness its root in pain—considering all pain as the absence of pleasure, so in like manner sublimity has its root in power, and meanness in impotence.

Sublimity, like beauty and ugliness, is a relative term,

and implies two things—first, an external quality in matter, and secondly, a subjective affection of the mind. The external quality is the suggestion of power, and the affection of mind is the emotion of awe. It is not the perception of innate power that excites awe, but the suggestion of latent power. The emotion of awe, therefore, like every other æsthetic emotion, is consequent upon an operation of the intellect, and when this operation does not take place, there can be no awe. It might be legitimate to dive deeper into the psychology of the subject; it might be possible to show that this emotion is agreeable by reason that we identify ourselves with the source and benefit of the power in question. The mere recognition of innate power in another person or in another thing is never a matter for self-congratulation; unless we identify ourselves with the origin of such power, or our interest with its good results, it is to us rather a source of humiliation and unhappiness, inasmuch as innate power being a sign of danger, according to its amount, causes fear and not awe. With suggested power the conditions are changed, for then the quality is not innate, but supplied to the object, and supplied by us. To create sublimity, therefore, we require an external object to invest with associated power; having so invested it, we make the object itself subsequently suggest this power; the object is, therefore, dependent on us—precisely the same principle, it will be observed, as obtains in beauty. These considerations are calculated to make us happy. The object then wears as its own, along with its innate power, the power with which we have clothed it; it is therefore independent of us. These considerations are calculated to check our happiness. Hence the emotion of awe would appear to be a perpetual striving of a feeling to rise into happiness upon the occurrence of one set of thoughts, and a perpetual repression of the tendency by the occurrence of another set of thoughts. Awe, therefore, is a higher but less agreeable emotion than admiration.

Power may manifest itself under a great variety of forms, such, for example, as force, design, space, time, influence, genius, &c. So far as our present purpose is concerned, however, the only intelligible classification of power is that of innate and suggested. In order to understand how sublimity can vary inversely with innate and directly with suggested power, we must appreciate with accuracy the difference between the two forms. By innate power, I mean that which an object itself exercises either by contact, force, or some other immediate mode expressed in practical operation to the senses. By suggested power, I mean such as lies behind and beyond the object, such as is promised, heralded, or hinted at, but not expressed in actual operation. If innate power be actually expressed, we cannot identify ourselves with its origin; it is there before our eyes; it is perceived by us; it operates in spite of us, and we cannot even in imagination connect ourselves with its cause. Such power, therefore, cannot engender awe.

Ugliness and meanness occupy the interval between beauty and sublimity. A small addition of innate power to an object ugly or mean at once releases it from disgust or contempt, because it is impossible for any kind of power to appear disgusting or contemptible. Let us test this assertion. Lice, flies, and worms may be disgusting because of their inutility, or contemptible because of their impotence; but let these creatures be endowed with innate power, let a weapon of destruction be given them, let the lice become wasps, let the flies become mosquitoes, and let the worms become asps, and we can no longer afford to regard the objects of our contemplation with our former emotions; the creatures are now offensive and dangerous, and it will not do to despise or condemn them; we must, in fact, *fear* them in a greater or a less degree. Similarly, eels and toads may be disgusting or contemptible on account of their inutility or their impotence, but if their impotence be removed, even at the expense of increased inutility, they are at once relieved from disgust and con-

tempt. Let the eels become vipers and the toads scorpions, and instead of disgust or contempt, we shall contemplate the creatures with a shudder or a thrill. A mangy, outcast, worthless dog may be looked upon as disgusting or contemptible; we loathe to set eyes on him; we desire to have him away from our thoughts and from our sight. Suppose now we were to hear that the dog was mad, and trotting down the road to meet us, how should our feelings change in an instant! Contempt and disgust would vanish like a lightning flash, and terror and excitement would seize hold upon our minds. Whither shall we fly? how shall we escape? who will kill the dog? shall we be bitten and go mad? what is to be done? No, verily, this is no time for disgust or contempt; we are fired with a much stronger emotion, for the presence of danger is always fearful. The dog is killed, however, and lies a mangled carcase on the roadside. Observe now how, with the loss of innate power in the object and the removal of danger, our fear subsides, and returning disgust and contempt begin again to take its place; we desire to have the dead animal flung into the sea or burned or buried, for the object is contemptible and the carrion disgusting.

Similarly, pigs are unclean animals; they live in filth; they will eat almost anything; they are emphatically disgusting. Wild boars, however, though they be as omnivorous and as foul, would, by reason of their wildness and fierceness, prevent us from regarding them with the same feelings. We may not, it is true, contemplate dangerous animals with awe, but we certainly do not look upon them with contempt. Fear is stronger than either contempt, awe, disgust, or admiration, and so strong indeed, that all other emotions give way before it. It would be easy for any one to find a thoroughly contemptible cat; not so easy to come across a thoroughly contemptible dog; very difficult to procure a thoroughly contemptible wolf, and impossible perhaps even to imagine a thoroughly con-

temptible tiger—facts which are fully accounted for by the increasing proportion of innate power.

The sound of sawing, the whirl of machinery, or the lowing of a cow hard by may be interesting, or may awaken no particular emotion, according to circumstances; but if the sound were a herald of danger, we should be thrown at once into a commotion. Suppose, for instance, we were told that the noise proceeded from a lion or a tiger broken loose from a menagerie; we should be beside ourselves in an instant, harrowed with excitement and fear. If, however, we should ascertain finally that the sound was caused by a boy imitating the roar of a wild beast, contempt would for the first time fill our minds. A heap of soot is contemptible and disgusting, because the thing is powerless and useless; but fill it with innate power, make it dangerous, let it become a heap of gunpowder, and shall we not regard it with very altered emotions? A vault full of stones and bones and filth, shown to us by the light of a match with which a man is lighting his pipe, is a loathsome spectacle; a vault full of dynamite shown to us under the same circumstances would be a fearful spectacle. A piece of rotten wood or a fish's carcase passed by a ship at sea would be sufficiently contemptible; if, however, the object turned out to be a torpedo, it would become decidedly terrible. A porpoise under the same circumstances would be gazed on with indifference; not so a shark or a whale. A person labouring under an evil complaint might be regarded with disgust; let the malady become contagious, and we become something more than disgusted; we become nervous, and careful, and apprehensive; much more so if the disease be virulent and infectious. The same principle might be traced through a thousand coincidences. With the authorship of innate power we cannot possibly identify ourselves, consequently we cannot experience awe for the person, place, or thing possessing it.

Let us advance a step and examine some objects possessing innate power, whose power, being seldom exercised or

seldom seen in operation, is suggested rather than asserted. Such objects will be sublime and awe-inspiring except upon those rare occasions when their power is exerted with danger or detrimental effect. A sword, for example, which has been used in battle becomes, when shown in time of peace, in a certain degree sublime. No doubt the weapon is made for cutting and thrusting and hacking the enemy; but then it is not likely to do so now, or at any definite time. I have never seen it cut or thrust or hack; I have never seen it or any sword harm any one; I have only *heard* of such operations; its power, therefore, though innate, is so remote, that, to me at least, it is only suggested, and therefore the object is sublime. Place a butcher's knife beside this sword and mark the difference. I have often seen a butcher's knife hewing and dividing meat; I see the operation every time I pass a meat-shop; and whenever I choose I can go and witness the weapon at work. The performance, however, is by no means interesting or artistic; the work is too gross and useful to engender delicate emotions; such cool and remorseless cutting up, moreover, suggests how easily my own limbs might be hewn in pieces without resistance, were the butcher to be murderously inclined, and I recollect that such things have occurred. These suggestions, this constant use, this innate power, therefore, precludes the possibility of regarding a butcher's knife as in any degree sublime. A volcanic eruption is a mighty sight, a sublime spectacle. A volume of fire and smoke and lava issuing from a crater is a powerful occurrence, and calculated to awaken awe. Compare with it the flowing of a muddy, sluggish river, or the shifting of bogs, which are known to transport themselves from one place to another, taking huts and habitations along with them; and the latter, I think, will be found not at all sublime; for, in the first place, there is little appearance of power, and in the second place there may be much mischief. If, however, the eruption should cause great destruction to life and pro-

perty, it would speedily cease to be sublime and would become dreadful. If we were to see the molten lava overwhelming a town, destroying the houses, the cattle, and the gardens, overtaking the inhabitants in their flight and bringing them to a cruel and shocking end, we should contemplate the spectacle with horror, not with awe. Sunsets are sometimes strikingly sublime as well as beautiful, the lurid sky and the far-off sinking orb transporting us in imagination to trackless and unpeopled regions, indefinite and ideal, buried in the past or unborn in the future. Should the red effulgence, however, which met our gaze, turn out to be the reflection of a blazing forest, the sight would still be sublime, but much less beautiful than before, much more definite and unideal; there would be less room for sentimental cogitations or poetic fancies. Were the heavenly flow caused by the flames of a burning city in which our friends or we ourselves resided, and where we understood many people were being burned to death, our awe would inevitably disappear before the stronger emotion of appalling horror.

The remarks before hazarded concerning a sword would apply in principle to many other things—a fort, a cannon, a man-of-war, &c. A fortress is a sublime object; its masonry, its bastions, curtains, and embrasures suggest enormous strength—strength to resist the bombardment of the enemy, and centuries of rain and wind and storm. Its guns are likewise sublime; and provided we can identify ourselves in any way with their utility or couple our interests with their services—much more if they are intended for the protection of our lives and the safety of our property—those guns which have been used in action against the enemy, will, other things being equal, be more sublime than the others, because their suggested power is greater. If, however, while you were contemplating a fortress from without, the guns should suddenly open fire upon you, killing your companion or blowing off your horse's head, some feeling very different from awe would possess your

mind. An ironclad is a sublime and noble object while riding at anchor or moving majestically on the sea; not so when two fleets are in action, with their blasting broadsides blazing at each other, when rigging, masts, and men are shot away, when grappling and boarding and bayoneting begins, when the air is filled with the groans of the wounded and the dying, when the sea is strewn with wreckage and uniform, or is bubbling with the gasps of the drowning. No, verily, we cannot say such sights are sublime; they are perfectly fearful.

Again, a battle expected to come off, especially if we have any stake in the issue—and we have all some stake in the lives of our fellow-creatures—is in no way sublime; we are filled with alternate anticipations of victory and defeat, of confidence and misgivings; hopes and apprehensions chase each other through the mind like the northern lights; we are torn within by perplexing thoughts and contending emotions; our mind itself is a battlefield till the result be known. Even a victory recently gained will not present unmixed sublimity; while the widow's mourning is noticed, and the orphan's loss is known, while the vacant chair is seen, and the household head is missed, there will be other qualities besides sublimity in the event, other emotions besides awe in the mind. Far otherwise is it with a battle of antiquity, when every wound has been healed, every gap filled, every loss repaired. We can pass Thermopylæ without a shudder, we can stand on Marathon without grief, knowing that the sorrow and the pain are past, and the great result alone remains; thinking only of the heroes in their graves below, and of the immortal work they accomplished, of the great repulse of fate effected on that field, of the title-deeds of liberty enfolded in that soil, and of the long and widening difference of destiny which many a nation traces to that plain—indulging in these meditations, we are filled with unadulterated awe.

Again, distant thunder is sublime because it is always

suggestive and never dangerous. Very close overhead, however, we associate it so much with the lightning flash and its dire destructiveness, that it becomes more or less dreadful. It is similar with regard to lightning. In the distance, over mountains, forests, deserts, or seas, lightning may be very sublime; not so, however, if it should strike a tree before our eyes or kill a comrade at our side. A storm at sea is sublime when we watch it from a place of safety: the enormous power to harm and overwhelm which the waves suggest, but do not exercise, calls up the awe of the beholder. If, however, we should discern a ship in danger or see it dashed to pieces on a rock—the cargo flung about the beach, and the mangled bodies of the seamen hurled against the cliffs, and wedged amongst the fissures—æsthetic feelings must retire and more harassing emotions succeed. How different this last picture from the sublimely suggestive power of water discovered in Niagara on a pleasant summer day. A tall and beetling precipice is sublime; it suggests strength and age, height, and danger, and death; but being only passive, it does no more than suggest; it does not assert, until we see some one on the summit lose his balance and fall headlong into the abyss; then we connect the cliff's power with the accident; we father the calamity on the height, and treat the object as we did the thunder.

Again, the sun is very sublime as it rises in the east and travels over heaven's plain with noiseless tread, dispensing light and heat to all the world, showering blessings on the wicked and on the wise, unrealisable in its distance, its weight, and its magnitude, unfathomable in its influence, irresistible in its movement, and steadfast in its progress. On the scorching deserts of Arabia or the arid sands of Africa, where its unmitigated fury dries up the water, burns the herbage, drives men under cover, weakens and exhausts the frame, or smiting the incautious traveller with its beams, shatters his intellect and constitution, the same sun is anything but sublime.

Let us advance a step higher, and examine some objects practically possessing no innate, but a great deal of suggested power; and here we shall reach a class of things impressing us with more unalloyed sublimity, and inspiring us with more unfeigned awe, than the doubtful or fluctuating examples we have hitherto considered. In this department of the subject there is one species of suggested power deserving of a special consideration, I mean the power we attribute to *design*. Whenever we see a rational result, rightly or wrongly we infer a rational cause; and when we see a highly complex but intelligible effect, we conclude a highly complex but intelligent design; and comparing the visible result with the inferred design, we are filled with awe at the power that could so marvellously conceive and so effectually execute. And more than this, when we recognise the same results in part we infer the same design in whole, and thus despise the impotence which betrayed the workman, allowing him the faculties to intend, but leaving him without the ability to perform. Whether in these deductive excursions our conclusions are metaphysically correct or not, it does not signify at all; whether the power we recognise in an object or the design we draw from it is directly due to an intelligent author, to an immutable law, or to the constitution of our own understandings, makes really no difference. We know that the phenomena are there; and though we admit to reason that we did not cause them, yet the more we acquaint ourselves with the phenomena, the more we exercise our intellect upon the matter, and the more we unravel the design, so much the more satisfied we become, and so much the more prone to connect ourselves with the authorship and finisher of the whole process. This is all that it is necessary for us to know or believe, in order to create sublimity or experience awe.

Now one great branch of design is expressed in what is termed *organism*, and whenever we concentrate our attention upon an organism—even though the object sustaining

it be mean and ugly—we become cognisant of a certain amount of sublimity. The dead carcase of a dog may reveal marvels of organism, of which we had before no conception; it may tell us of designs lofty and unfathomable, and of execution unapproachably perfect. Had we nothing else on which to bestow our attention, the structure of cobwebs, the organisms of reptiles, the form and habits of vermin, would infallibly furnish us with sublimity and touch us with awe. Observe the elevated associations of human sympathy and affection which Byron makes the prisoner of Chillon bestow on mice and spiders, on the walls of his lonely dungeon, and on the very fetters that bound himself. A weed beside a flower may be ugly or mean; yet if we confine our attention to its organic structure, we shall find it neither disgusting nor contemptible, but not a little sublime. A dandelion may possess an organism of matchless symmetry and astonishing workmanship,—the tubes, the cells, the fibres, the root, the stem, the blossom and the leaves, with their various systems of physiology, nutrition, assimilation, absorption, transpiration, respiration, germination, fertilisation, efflorescence,—all bespeak a depth of design and a power of execution which throw us back upon our own minds for a solution of the mystery. Having accepted a solution, we maintain it in preference to all others, and give ourselves credit both for the ingenuity of the plan we have discovered and the perfection of the performance which we recognise. Half the value and effect of painting and engraving arises from this source. As soon as we have come to the conclusion that the artist had intended to portray a human being, we have caught the design; and having satisfied ourselves that his efforts seconded or failed to second his intention, or, in other words, that the author had sufficient or insufficient power to perform what he had intended, we regard the result as sublime or contemptible. The same remarks apply to sculpture and to all works of art. Great discoveries are sublime according

to the amount of power they suggest; those which seem to be the fulfilment of a preconcerted plan, whether in philosophy, science, art, war, or exploration, will be most sublime; and those which look like the result of accident, mistake, or chance, will not be at all sublime. There would be very little sublimity in the discovery of America by Columbus had the great traveller been driven westward by misadventure and with no anticipations of such a glorious issue. Great poems, speeches, literary and musical compositions, are all sublime upon the same principle—the suggestion of power in following out a preconceived intention; for we believe that none of these works can be achieved by chance. The design, of course, must be understood, or in some manner appreciated, before the workmanship can appear sublime, just as the utility must be apprehended before the object can appear beautiful.

Hitherto, it will be noticed, no special attention has been devoted to *sound* as an object of beauty or sublimity. Sound is a sensation, and, like colour, shape, odour, flavour, and every other sensation, may be pleasant or unpleasant. Sound, like colour and shape, is caused by vibrations. The vibration of a tuning-fork, for instance, sets the air undulating, and these undulations striking on the tympanum cause sound in the mind. The air is capable of great diversity of vibration both as regards pitch, tone, and intensity; and when these qualities combine in one series of vibrations, the effect on the mind will be proportionately complex. If the various parts of any series of vibrations, or the various series of any system of vibrations, agree, combine, or coalesce, the effect upon the tympanum and auditory nerve will be pleasant; and if they disagree, repel, or contradict each other, the effect will be unpleasant. Sharp and abrupt vibrations are, irrespective of tone and intensity, less grateful than regular or uniform ones; and thus sound, as a sensation, is readily explicable on the same principle as that which we have applied to

shape; and into this part of the subject accordingly it is not necessary at present to penetrate further.

In dealing with the objective quality of suggestiveness as brought out in poetry, we found that the songs of birds were no less potent than the objects of sight in giving rise to beautiful similes and analogies. We have seen all that the skylark was to Shelley and to Wordsworth, all that the cuckoo also was to the latter; and if we further analysed the works of poets, we should find all that the nightingale was to Keats, to Barnefield, and to Milton, and all that many other birds were to many other poets. The songs of birds may well be termed beautiful; but the higher music of art, and indeed music in general, is more appropriately, I think, described as being sublime than beautiful. The emotions caused by music are, I think, referable rather to awe than admiration. The question, like all other cognate questions, can only be settled by ascertaining, not the nature of the emotion, but the nature of the thoughts and suggestions which cause the emotion we experience. Beauty and sublimity are based externally on suggestions; music therefore, whether it be beautiful or sublime, can only be so by virtue of the suggestions it occasions; and since those suggestions when made out will, I think, be found to imply design and power as prominent essentials, this section of our subject properly falls under the head of sublimity. Music, indeed, with the thoughts and emotions it calls up, more nearly approaches ethical phenomena than does any other portion of æsthetics; and since we identify ourselves, not with the effect merely of the performance we appreciate, but with the design and execution of that performance, it will be in all respects more convenient to consider music under sublimity.

The emotions inspired by music are capable of much variety and of a large compass of intensity; those, however, with which it is necessary to deal at present are a refinement of awe, and may, I think, be properly described by the word *sentimentality*. Half the efficacy of music

must be attributed to design; and if this primary conception be absent there will be no harmony, but discord—no music, but noise—no sentimentality, but contempt. If the design be lofty, vast, and well carried out, the performance will be sublime; if the design be meagre or the execution poor, our emotion will vary in proportion. Some operas, oratorios, overtures, marches, sonatas, or certain passages from them, are, when worthily rendered, extremely sublime; but it is not to be supposed that throughout the entire of any piece, or even throughout the whole of any passage, the suggestions or emotions will remain the same; for music is very potent in versatile suggestions, and may call up now a violent passion, now a tender affection, now a mixed emotion, and now a number of conflicting ones. All such suggestions, however, will be found, I think, to refer to human passions or sentiments, and to nothing else. The epithets we employ to characterise tunes and airs are a strong corroboration of this position, for almost all of these epithets are applicable to a mind in a state of emotion. We speak, for instance, of a cheerful air; a lively, merry, gay, or joyful strain; of a mournful air; a sad, melancholy, sorrowful, solemn, plaintive air; of a thrilling, vigorous, spirited, animating, soul-stirring tune, and so on.

The effect upon the mind of the various kinds of airs and tunes is well known and largely taken advantage of. That kind of music called mournful is played at funerals, and is very appropriate; that termed joyful is played at weddings, and befits the occasion; that known as animating, spirit-stirring, or martial, is widely availed of, and is provided by nearly all governments for their military forces; this latter sort of music, like heated eloquence, has great power to stir men's minds, to rouse enthusiasm to the highest pitch, and make the soldier capable of any deed of daring—"What passion cannot music raise and quell?" And yet it can only raise or quell passions by latent associations, for music does not utter articulate

words; nevertheless, its sounds must be intelligible to be interpreted, "for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" Poets have been well aware of these facts, and many of them have liberated and clothed in words some of the suggestions through which music operates. Dryden gives the following:—"The trumpet's loud clangour excites us *to arms*, with shrill notes of *anger* and mortal *alarms*. The double, double, double beat of the *thundering* drum cries, '*Hark! the foes come; charge, charge; 'tis too late to retreat!*' The soft *complaining* lute in *dying* notes discovers the *woes of hopeless lovers*, whose dirge is *whispered* by the warbling lute. Sharp violins proclaim their *jealous pangs and desperation, fury, frantic indignation, depth of pains and height of passion* for the fair disdainful dame." The rest of this "Song for Saint Cecilia's Day," together with Pope's ode on the same subject, and Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," may be consulted with much advantage. Collins, indeed, when composing a poem on "The Passions," actually makes those feelings take the form of musicians, and represents each as performing a part in keeping with the emotion denoted by his name—"First *Fear* his hand its skill to try. . . . Next *Anger* rushed, his eyes on fire . . . with woeful measures wan *Despair*. . . . But thou, O *Hope!* with eyes so fair. . . . With a frown *Revenge* impatient rose. . . . Thy numbers, *Jealousy*, to nought were fixed," &c. These pronounced emotions, however, are not the appropriate response to true musical sublimity or beauty; they are patently forms of passion, and neither beauty nor sublimity occasion passion. Passion, be it understood, is only emotion in activity, obeying or ready to obey the will. Any emotion may become a passion and lead to action; but it is the passive emotions, the inactive affections, which constitute the awe or admiration belonging to music. Music speaks, and speaks well-nigh as eloquently as words. A mournful air may have the effect of a funeral oration, and draw tears and sobs; a

martial tune may animate like a spirited harangue, and urge to battle and victory; a grand orchestral overture may act like elevated oratory, and daze with ecstasy or fill with wild enthusiasm; a whimsical fantastic air may call forth laughter, and so on. Such influences as these belong rather to morals than to art, the feeling experienced being an ethical rather than an æsthetic impression.

The music which is properly sublime or beautiful is that which begets *sentimentality* in the hearer, or which, in other words, fills him with a dreamy meditation, with vague yearning, with undefinable cravings, with indescribable visions, with inexplicable reverie, with—he knows not what. All music is associated with the human voice, and thus causes some emotion, agreeable or otherwise. As we sit and listen to sublime music we become by turns “disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;” we fancy ourselves lifted above earth, carried away to immortal regions, and conversing with beings whom the earth hath lost—beings purified from human imperfections and worldly stains; we see the works and hear the voices and participate in the glories of the good; we feed exalted aspirations with immortal satisfaction; we are all-wise; we are all-able; we are unopposed; we roam through realms of a boundless empire, or tarry in a blissful servitude; we are subjects in a perfect communism, or monarchs in a universal sovereignty. In short, the suggestions of sublime music are infinite and undefinable; we may succeed in dragging a few of them to light and clothing them in language, but an inexhaustible remainder will ever lie latent below. With lighter music, and for music which bespeaks small design and littleness of execution, sentimentality, of course, will be so much lighter in intensity. Some minds, moreover, are not fit receptacles for the influence of music, while others are peculiarly susceptible to its fascination; some persons have a wonderful ear for music, others have absolutely none; some persons can find nothing but sound in the most finished melodies, others find all that is enchanting

in the carol of a bird. Examine the suggestions with which the latter inspires the prisoner of Chillon in his cell: "It was the carol of a bird . . . the sweetest song ear ever heard . . . a light broke in upon my brain . . . a lovely bird with azure wings and song that *said a thousand things, and seemed to say them all for me. . . . It seemed like me to want a mate, but was not half so desolate, and it was come to love me when none lived to love me so again . . . in winged guise a visitant from paradise. . . .* I sometimes thought that it might be *my brother's soul come back to me.*" This may afford an idea of the power even of very simple music, and of the kind of suggestions it is capable of awakening in the mind.

Somewhat of the same species of awe may be occasioned by great extent of space or lapse of time, which conceptions fill yet baffle the intellect, attract yet appal the imagination. Distant countries cause indefinite ideas, and are, other things being the same, more sublime than neighbouring ones. An inaccessible mountain, whose virgin snow has never been trodden, whose loftiness has repelled the boldest adventurers from the beginning of time, and whose summit is earth's nearest approach to celestial regions, engenders similar suggestions: we have scaled its heights in thought, we are there in fancy, we own it all, and we own it unquestioned and unrivalled, we wander and arrange and rule, with none to gainsay or unsettle. Little hills or oft-climbed mountains engender no such thoughts. Immense plains and deserts likewise, that do no harm, but which imply great privations, suffering, and danger to cross, are in this respect sublime. The sky, whose distance, extent, or duration we cannot grasp, is in like manner sublime. Silence and night are sublime. All these sublimities are the result of suggested power. Let us take an example from the last-named—silence and night. A great church-bell pealing by day does not beget much awe; by night it does. Why? Because of its suggested power: by night the atmosphere is still, the

hum of men is hushed, the streets are empty, brutes and cattle are at rest, all nature is asleep ; the peal, therefore, which by day was thwarted, smothered, or obstructed by harsher sounds and stronger vibrations, which did not get beyond a mile or so from its source, and was little suggestive among the crowd of noises that jangled upon the ear, now travels over houses and along streets, across parks and above trees, beyond suburbs and over hills, causing the vigilant watchdog to lift his head, admonishing the belated traveller, entering the open windows and speaking to the unslumbering sufferer, or mingling with the sleeper's dreams. So likewise the ocean when calm is very sublime ; the still water suggests all it has done, all it may do, but all it *is* not doing ; how suggestive is its power when seen in those mighty rocks and boulders upon a wild coast, cleft, and pierced, and shifted many perches up the shore, hurled about, the playthings of the billows ! Yes, its storms are dreadful, its tempests frightful, its hurricanes terrific ; but now, however, the sea is deep but peaceful, capable but quiescent, strong but merciful. For similar reasons it is that the moan *before* a storm and the rumble *preceding* an earthquake are, as Alison observes, far more sublime than the storm or the earthquake themselves.

Things ancient, because of their suggestiveness, are more sublime than things modern. Ruins are perhaps the best example of this fact. There is little innate, but there may be immense suggested power in a ruin. Take a feudal castle, for instance. Does it not tell of a thousand transactions that are ended—of a thousand persons who are gone ? Does it not speak of festive gatherings, of the chase and its return, of its spoils and relics in the hall, of unsettled times, of disquieting rumours, of approaching danger, of hostile gatherings, of siege and stress, of mail-clad warders, of garrisoned battlements and death-dispensing loopholes, of fierce assaults and bloody resistance, of triumphs and trophies, of pacts and treaties ? Or take a peaceful build-

ing—a great cathedral, an ancient library, or a hall of state; take even the massive portico alone, and does it not suggest enormous power—power coming out of the past and stretching into the future? Has it not sheltered our fathers for centuries from the sun and from the rain, from the wind and from the snow? Does it not shelter us now? And shall it not shelter our descendants for centuries to come? Thus those massive pillars and that huge entablature have shown their power before we were born and will exercise it after we are dead. Similarly, an elm or “monumental oak” may be an object of extreme sublimity; standing before the ancient manor-house, it is a mute but eloquent historian of the family’s fortunes; every bough has a tale to tell, and the old trunk is a repository of ancestral archives. What has this tree not known and seen? It has seen the heir coming of age, and the inaugural banquets that ensued; it has seen the family rise and seen it fall, seen it fluctuate and seen it flourish; it has seen guests and entertainments, conclaves and councils, rites and ceremonies; it has seen gatherings for congratulation and rejoicing, and gatherings for condolence and grief; it has heard the bleak December blast howl among the ancient turrets or whistle through the vacant corridors, “clattering the doors of deserted guardrooms,” and appalling the imagination of the lonely caretaker; it has seen the sun of summer and the haze of leafy June settle on the roof or play around the porch; it has seen the edifice gay and thronged with inmates, and seen it when there was “no sign of home from parapet to basement;” it has seen the lord of the manor brought forth as an infant to be christened, go forth as a bridegroom to be married, carried forth as a corpse to be buried. Such suggestions as these and under such circumstances are seldom worded, but are always felt by persons of poetic susceptibility.

We have now reached a class of objects whose innate power is remote and small, but whose suggested power is transcen-

dent, and whose sublimity is, as such things go, incontrovertible. Were further confirmation of the law we are seeking to establish required, it might be found in the fact that the dead are far more sublime than the living, their innate power being at its nadir, and their suggested power at its zenith. Even a bad eminence partially redeems itself by death, the power to injure being at an end, simple talent or potentiality begets a modicum of awe. The very greatest and best of men are less sublime alive than dead, and by parity of reasoning the most feared and hated are hated and feared a hundredfold more intensely during life than after death. Nothing is too odious or wicked to be attributed to a rival or a foe: so unfavourably suggestive is his conduct that no calumny is too vile to be repeated of him, no motive too base to be insinuated, no intention too vicious to be implied; "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness" may shower their missiles upon him without end, and nothing too much. After death invective takes a turn; indignation grows more moderate; slander speaks more slowly and less loud; charges are less frequently reiterated, for the enemy is no longer hostile, and the rival no longer threatens; by and by the execrable monster of the past may be brought up as a model of patriotism or magnanimity in comparison with another rival or another foe, and all this comes of the influence of *suggested* power. The same law holds good, though in a very different degree, of friends and colleagues—of those who are loved and praised and boasted of, be they poets or philosophers, statesmen or scholars; and for this reason, that human nature is fallible and subject to vicissitude: the living therefore are ever unreliable somewhat; we know what they have done, but we cannot tell what they *may* do; we cannot tell how they may belittle or belie themselves; we have no security for their future conduct but the probability of analogy; we are not certified as to what we must expect of them in the coming years. The moment these persons die, however, they become inexhaustibly

sublime; they have now paid all debts; they cannot alter; their sublimity grows as time advances, and years but root and strengthen it; the awe "where death has set his seal, nor age can chill nor rival steal nor falsehood disavow." Such lives offer us a past which is secured and stereotyped, and to that past we suggest a thousand counterparts.

The human countenance is capable of displaying, as well as beauty and ugliness, great sublimity. The features which express greatness of genius or of talent, we regard with awe; and in this case, as in every other, sublimity is based on power; and as the innate power of facial features is very small, the sublimity may be very great. This is felt by all, and there is probably more eagerness, curiosity, and excitement exhibited in obtaining a glimpse of a great man's face, than in beholding any other attractive sight in nature: accidents have happened, bones have been broken, lives have been lost, in securing a momentary and distant view of extraordinary men. Sublime countenances are almost always what is called *expressive*, i.e., they have well-defined traits and lineaments. There are, of course, many expressive faces which are not sublime, but hideous; many that suggest power, but noxious, mischievous, dangerous power. Expressive countenances which denote villany, cruelty, treachery, brutality, ferocity, &c., are not mean or ugly, as was before observed; they are horrible, hideous, abominable. Those that suggest obstinacy, bigotry, selfishness, sensuality, cowardice, mendacity, or other vices, are ugly and disgusting.

There is much difference of opinion—superficiality of judgment, perhaps it ought to be called—as to what countenances are hideous and forbidding, and what are extraordinary and great. Upon this point it may suffice to observe that certain faces, from the rare development of features accompanying a corresponding development of genius, might, by reason of that very rarity, easily appear ugly to the majority of persons who know of no qualities

in the countenance but those of ugliness and beauty. Such development, moreover, might bear a great resemblance to what we are accustomed to notice in tramps and ruffians, and yet might differ from them in the most essential particulars—particulars of trifling appearance but of transcendent moment. Any unusual phenomenon, if resembling a common phenomenon, is liable to be confounded by all unthinking persons with such common phenomenon. The countenance of Socrates is an eminent instance of this truth. Socrates is generally thought to have been very ugly, and so indeed he was according to popular estimate; but popular estimate is useful as a signpost more than as a compass. The fact is probably this:—the character of Socrates was in all respects very thorough and pronounced; and as no man is without his faults, the faults, together with the great genius and unparalleled virtues of that philosopher, may have stamped themselves very prominently in his countenance, producing a combination which ordinary observers were unable to appreciate, and which thus became repulsive to the many—an examination of the difficulty being saved by identifying the great man's features with those of rogues and cut-throats, and declaring physiognomy to be a snare. "Socrates was stupid, brutal, sensual, and addicted to drunkenness," said the physiognomist Zopyrus. "By nature," answered Socrates, "I am addicted to all these vices, and they were only restrained and vanquished by the continual practice of virtue."

True, we say of a man sublimely great or good, that his genius sanctifies his ugliness; but we forget to inquire whether our own judgment as to the ugliness be correct or not. Let Lavater speak once more:—"In the study of physiognomy, it cannot be too much inculcated nor too often repeated by a writer on the science, that disposition and development, talents, powers, their application and use, the stolid and inflexible parts, the prominent and fugitive traits, must be most accurately distinguished if

we would form an accurate judgment on the human countenance." "Characters pregnant with strong contending powers generally contain in the great mass—the prominent feature of the face—somewhat of severe, violent, and perplexed, consequently are very different from what Grecian artists and men of taste name beauty; while the signification, the expression of such prominent features are not studied and understood, such countenances will offend the eye that searches only for beauty. The countenance of Socrates is manifestly of this kind."

Truly great men seldom or never express what is called beauty in their countenances. Good-looking women, it may be observed, are said to be beautiful, and good-looking men are termed handsome; but the great are neither beautiful nor handsome; they are noble, impressive, sublime. An examination of the features of the most renowned and illustrious geniuses of the world would, I think, bear out this remark, by presenting to us, not beauty, but greatness, strength, power. This, however, it is impossible to do; for when a man dies, his features, like the colour of flowers, are gone. Pictures and engravings are generally most misleading, the latter more especially; it is extremely improbable that more than a very few engravings of great men bear a faithful resemblance to their professed originals; while it very often happens that separate and independent plates of the same person bear no greater likeness to one another than a negro to an Englishman, and that even after taking the difference of age, growth, or decay into consideration. "I shudder," says Lavater, "when I remember the supposed likenesses which are found between certain portraits and shades and the living originals." Making every allowance, however, for these facts, dispensing with particulars, and satisfying ourselves with such portraits as agree in the general delineation of features or expression, we shall, I think, in certain pictures of great men find confirmation of the proposition above put forward. Without going back to such antiquity as would

render fidelity impossible, we may, I apprehend, trace sublimity in the received representations of Peter the Great, of Henry IV. of France, of Luther, of Hobbes, of Lord Chatham, of Dante, of Milton (in his old age), of Beethoven, of Michael Angelo, of Handel, of the Duke of Wellington, of Galileo, of Benjamin Franklin, of Burke, of Newton, of Humboldt, and others. If we occasionally find something decidedly ominous in the countenance of a great man, we should inquire whether there was not likewise something decidedly ominous in his character; for no character is without its vices, no life without its errors. If, therefore, we find something forbidding in the features of Swift, we should remember that there was also something forbidding in his character—misanthropy, haughtiness, virulence; if we find something revolting in the countenance of Voltaire, we should remember that there was also something revolting in his character—meanness, ferocity, contempt; if we find something disagreeable in the countenance of Johnson, we must also remember that there was something disagreeable in his character—slovenliness, bigotry, superstition; if we find something vulgar in the face of Hogarth, we must remember that there was something vulgar in his character—propensity for depicting low, vile, degraded humanity; and so on. The predilections of strong-minded men, whether good or bad, will be strong and deep-rooted, and, as such, will be strongly asserted in the countenance. This principle extended and applied to all cases would, I apprehend, account for the various conditions which constitute beauty and ugliness, sublimity and meanness in the human form, which awaken our admiration or disgust, our awe or contempt.

Lastly, it may be remarked that “awful” no longer signifies “full of awe,” but refers rather to the external quality than to the mental affection. The word is used, moreover, very loosely, as synonymous with terrible, frightful, dangerous, &c. I have therefore omitted to employ it altogether in this disquisition.

CHAPTER IX.

MEANNESS.

1. *Meanness attaches only to impotence.*
2. *Meanness varies directly with suggested impotence.*

BEAUTY and sublimity are distinct phenomena, and have, as has been said, distinctly appropriated emotions, that of the first being admiration, and that of the second awe. These phenomena and these emotions have their antitheses, the former in ugliness and meanness, the latter in disgust and contempt. It is not given to all animals to feel contempt—the appropriate emotion for meanness; and amongst human beings some are much more susceptible to it than others.

Meanness is a relative term and implies two things:—first, an objective quality of matter, and secondly, a subjective affection of the mind. The objective quality is impotence or the want of power; the subjective affection is contempt. Beauty and sublimity often co-exist in various proportions; nevertheless, the two phenomena are too important and distinct to be confounded under one name, or considered together, because though they co-exist they do not coalesce. It is likewise with their antitheses, ugliness and meanness, so that it has been found convenient to separate the quality of ugliness from that of meanness, the emotion of disgust from that of contempt.

Meanness depends, as has been said, upon impotence or the want of power. I say the *want* of power—not

its absence,—the difference is not unimportant; it is, in fact, momentous, and is this: absence of power is purely a negative quality, and awakens no emotion in the mind; it implies nothing more than at first presents itself to view; in other words, it is an innate though negative quality beyond which we cannot go. Now, all æsthetic qualities are, as has been shown, based and built, not upon innate but upon suggested qualities. Impotence is a suggested quality; it suggests an effort, a desire, or a wish to attain power, and that effort, desire, or wish frustrated or denied. It betokens the intention without the ability to express itself. It suggests, in short, a positive tendency negatived; and it is this suggestion that generates contempt. Birds and plants and flowers, apart from their organisms, though they may exhibit the absence of power, do not suggest the *want* of it. Flies, inasmuch as they consume putrid matter, filth, and ordure, and thus prevent it from remaining noxious or breeding fever, are useful, and not at all ugly or contemptible; but inasmuch as these insects also come into our chambers, and crawl over our victuals and our persons, they are disgusting and provoking; and inasmuch as they are incapable of defending themselves or retaliating, should we yield to the provocation and make a raid upon them, they are contemptible.

The sudden withdrawal of power from whatever or wherever we are accustomed to find it, suggests impotence and generates contempt. Wasps and scorpions deprived of their stings become thereby contemptible; whether they will remain so depends upon whether they can be made in any way subservient to our pleasure or our interests. Sheet lightning as compared with forked is contemptible, because it suggests the absence of the characteristic of lightning; compared with the artificial flashing of lime lights, fireworks, electric lights, &c., it is not all contemptible, because it suggests greater height, distance, and immensity. Millionaires and very wealthy

persons are regarded by the crowd as petty monarchs, the centre of attraction, the observed of all observers, high and mighty personalities; and all because their condition and state are so suggestive—suggestive of the power of having servants and authority and everything that money can procure. Reduced to beggary, such persons are regarded by the crowd with contempt, are, in fact, no longer thought of, heard of, or looked at. Monarchs who have abdicated share to a certain extent the same fate, their authority is crippled, their influence is extinguished, their grandeur, majesty, dignity, and all the power these suggested, are taken away; the awe, therefore, with which these qualities were regarded being suddenly stopped, contempt takes possession of the mind.

On the same principle it is that hand-made ornament, if sufficiently considerable, may easily be thought sublime, while machine-made ornament, though ever so perfect and elaborate, would probably never be regarded with awe. We were acquainted with the former long before we knew anything of the latter; the former, moreover, suggests the trouble and anxiety of human design, the pains and skill of human execution; each feature and each detail bespeak attention and solicitude, and, like each leaf of the forest, imply an individuality which defies complete similarity with anything else. Machine-made ornament suggests nothing of this, but on the contrary implies a thousand other specimens exactly similar in construction, and turned out with ease from the same machine; compared with hand-made ornament, therefore, it is contemptible. So likewise the painting or carving of artificial objects—glass, clothes, paper, ribbons, houses, furniture, &c., is, other things being equal, much less sublime than representations of natural objects, human beings, animals, trees, flowers, and insects; for the latter suggest organic structure or creation, and consequently design and power, while the former betray an inorganic structure or manufacture, and consequently the absence of design and the triviality of

power. Few things could be more contemptible than the painting or carving of *artificial* flowers.

Suppose we were in a position to contemplate a vast cliff rising sheer from the edge of a gloomy lake to the height of a thousand feet; and suppose that while impressed by its strength, its age, its height, its majesty, its danger—in other words, by its suggested power—we should suddenly discover that the whole scene was painted, how contemptible it would instantly become; and some time must elapse after the shock before we could afford to admire it as a painting, or else wonder at its workmanship. For beauty and sublimity cannot coalesce, that is, they cannot be appreciated together. We cannot be awed by a majestic mountain and at the *same time* be filled with admiration for a sprig of heather growing upon it; we must be led gradually from the contemplation of the one to that of the other; we cannot jump the interval without a shock. This is the secret of a good, and the explanation of a bad climax. When Hamlet says to the ghost, "I'll call thee *Hamlet, king, father, royal Dane*," he gives us a false climax; for, having begun with *Hamlet*, the title of friendship, and brought us up to *king*, the title of sublimity, to bring us down suddenly to the endearing relationship of *father*, and then to fling us back again upon the cold and stately *royal Dane*, is to tamper with our feelings.

It behoves us, moreover, to distinguish carefully between the two qualities—beauty and sublimity—when, in a state of co-existence, either of them predominates, for we frequently confound admiration with awe, and call a thing sublime when we mean that it is beautiful, and beautiful when we mean sublime. A story is somewhere told of Coleridge standing with some persons before a roaring cataract: while the former was rapt in awe and silence at the fury of the torrent, one of the bystanders exclaimed, "How beautiful!" an expression which so filled the poet with contempt at the thoughtlessness of

the speaker, that he turned away, unable to enjoy the scene any longer.

Suppose that, somehow or other, we were to find ourselves examining an ivy-clad ruin in some ancient demesne, and that while deeply impressed with its antiquity, and labouring to deliver ourselves of some of the suggestions which caused our awe, we were suddenly to be told that the whole structure was artificial—an imitation ruin; would we not forthwith be filled with the utmost contempt? So likewise all modern things are, *ceteris paribus*, less sublime than ancient things.

Bad music is contemptible because it suggests want of power—poverty of design; bad performance is contemptible because it discloses want of power—inability to execute. Bad acting, bad painting, bad sculpture, bad poetry are all contemptible on the same principle—want of power, the want of power to imitate nature faithfully, or to fulfil the design which the occasion dictates, or which the performer proclaims as his aim. All enterprises which have an unsuccessful termination are more or less contemptible. Certain buildings begun with great promise and ambition, and abandoned from lack of means or miscalculation of site, become contemptible, and are called the builder's "Folly."

The face of a murderer, of a villain, of a savage, &c., is not, as was before observed, mean or ugly; it is hideous, horrible, odious. We do not despise or condemn it; we dislike and hate and fear it. The face of a fool, an idiot, or an imbecile, on the other hand, is most contemptible. We expect at first to find in every man and woman an average amount at least of intellectual power, according to the position in which we encounter them; the very fact that the persons we contemplate are human beings suggests this much—suggests a fair amount of reflection, and memory, and reason, and imagination, such as we have abundant experience of every day. If, therefore, any one disappoints us by exhibiting abilities far below

the average, or by betraying the absence of all ability, such a person becomes thereby partially or thoroughly contemptible.

The essence of meanness has been largely explained in the induction of sublimity, as was ugliness in that of beauty. Men, however, dislike to dwell on this side of the science; they are unwilling to lend their attention to what is confessedly disagreeable. They desire to get rid of such influences with all possible celerity, and fly to the investigation of their antitheses. From reflections upon ugliness and meanness they desire to be free; in reflections upon beauty and sublimity they love to revel and remain. It is no wonder, therefore, that ugliness and meanness should be much confused, that disgust and contempt should be commonly indiscriminated.

In bringing this brief inquiry to a close, the writer may be permitted to observe that a detailed refutation of previous hypotheses in the subject of æsthetics forms no part of the purpose of these pages; nor is any pretension made of having reduced the matter to its ultimate elements. The speculations of former writers—Hogarth, Burke, Alison, and others—so far from being at variance with the theory herein put forward, seem to take their places naturally and necessarily under one or other of the laws adopted, and are only incorrect when made to embrace and account for the *whole* of the phenomena in question. On the other hand, too many warnings stare out upon us from the past to allow of any such futile claim being made as that of having reduced the problem to its ultimate elements. Who shall prescribe a boundary to investigation, or limit the excursions of human reason? Who shall place a barrier before advancing inquiry, or say to his brother in science, “thus far shalt thou go, and no farther”? We may trace the thread of knowledge a little way, and fancy we have found its end, and glory, and boast, and prophecy. Fond and foolish expectation! It behoves us much to undeceive ourselves, to submit to

human nature, and confess, when we have done all we can, that we are unprofitable servants. Posterity will take up the thread where we have left it, and tracking it to lengths we dreamt not of, will leave it to future generations to carry on the exploration through unfathomed oceans, over dark continents, and onwards toward the great horizon of Truth, which still recedes, and will continue to recede forever.

CAPITULAR SUMMARY.

CHAPTER I.

BEAUTY.—The metaphysics of æsthetics—Moral of persistence—What constitutes beauty?—Neither utility nor perfection—First principle of metaphysics—Cognisant of self alone—This truth must underlie all others, and is stronghold of idealism—Idealism applied to æsthetics proves beauty and sublimity to be subjective and reflex—Objective bent of mind—Objective element of beauty; subjective element—Two kinds of feelings in the mind: 1. sensations; 2. emotions—Admiration is an emotion—Emotion implies an operation of the intellect, *i.e.*, an interpretation of sensations—Quality of beauty consists in *suggestiveness*.

Laws of Beauty:—

1. Subjective element of beauty consists in emotion of admiration.
2. Objective element of beauty consists in quality of suggestiveness.
3. Beauty attaches only to utility.
4. The appearance of beauty varies inversely with the appearance of utility.

CHAPTER II.

Law 1.—Difference between sensation and emotion in a recognition of beauty—*Colour* a sensation, therefore cannot be beautiful *per se*—Inverse gradation of sense and intelligence—Meaning of phrase “beautiful colour”—Experiments in colour—*Sound* a sensation, therefore not beautiful *per se*—*Shape* a sensation, therefore not beautiful *per se*—Analysis of shape—Why some shapes are more pleasant than others: capable of scientific explanation—Experiments in shape: sphere, cylinder, cube, cone—*Motion* a sensation, therefore not beautiful *per se*—Experiments in motion—Complementary motions analogous to complementary colours—We never look at objects impartially, *i.e.*, we never take optical sensations for what they are

music by Dryden and Pope and Collins and Byron—Prisoner of Chillon—Sublimity of space and time caused by suggested power—Examples from sound by night—Ruined castle, suggestions—Massive portico, suggested power—"Monumental oak" and suggested power—Dead and living—Suggested power of former—Innate power of latter—Genius alive and dead—Sublime features—Differences of opinion as to features of the great—Socrates, why thought ugly—Unreliability of engravings, &c.—Well-known faces—Something forbidding in faces of Swift, Voltaire, Johnson, Hogarth, explained—Meaning of "awful."

CHAPTER IX.

MEANNESS.—*Law 1.* Attaches only to impotence.

Law 2. Varies directly with suggested impotence.

Is antithesis of sublimity—"Absence" and "want" of power—Proper emotion, contempt—Withdrawal of power causes contempt—Examples—Machine-made ornament—Artificial cliff when discovered to be artificial—False climax—Confusion of beauty and sublimity—Artificial ruin—Bad music, acting, painting, sculpture, poetry, &c., contemptible because they suggest want of power—Hideous faces are not contemptible—Foolish faces are—Conclusion.

THE END.

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